

AN ANALYSIS OF NEOPENTECOSTAL MISSION THEOLOGY, 1960-1990: FOUR CASE STUDIES

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and that previously it has neither been submitted nor published elsewhere.

Elizabeth Dodge Tyson
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ABSTRACT

Since 1960, particularly in the non-western world, there has been a remarkable increase in the number and size of independent pentecostal-like churches and organisations. Using a case-studies methodology, this thesis analyses the theology of mission of this "neopenteocostal" movement. Part One of the thesis introduces and sets the historical stage for the movement; Part Two analyses the movement's missiology. This analysis includes an examination of the movement's theology, aims, strategies and ecumenism as well as its role in society and relationship with the larger Church. Conclusions, incorporating the suggestion that a neopentecostal missiological paradigm of 'proclamation plus signs and wonders' be considered a third paradigm for mission studies, are drawn in the final chapter.

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PREFACE

My interest in independent pentecostalism was piqued during a brief mission opportunity in Zimbabwe, 1983. At the end of the several month program, the church in which I worked was experiencing the beginnings of a conflict which eventually ended by the splitting of the twenty-five member congregation. At the heart of the conflict was the issue of the charismata, or spiritual gifts. Those members which claimed that all the spiritual gifts, particularly physical healing, still function in the contemporary Church had become convicted so through the teachings of one of our case study group leaders. In time, this group of members left the church to form an independent fellowship of like-minded people. Because Rusape is a small town, the repercussions of this split were felt not only within ecclesiastical circles, but within the community's educational and social circles as well. In an attempt to more fully understand this incident, I began to research this group and other, similar new pentecostal-like movements.

At the heart of this paper lie several knotty issues for the Church in the 1990s. Perhaps the most foundational question raised in this thesis is "what is mission?". Is it a "going", a "being", or some of each? In untangling this question many secondary questions are raised, including the following: Is cross-cultural evangelism still necessary? If so, how is it best carried out? What is the Holy Spirit's role in evangelism? Is it a general empowerment for witness or is it a specific empowerment for a signs and wonders type of evangelism? What is ecumenism? Is it invisible or visible? Should it be grounded on a structural, theological, or spiritual foundation? How do different interpretations of ecumenism affect the life and witness of the Church?

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the mission theology of four neopentecostal organisations, with special reference to Africa and North America, and to propose a sketch of a larger, operational neopentecostal missiology. The phenomenon of neopentecostalism, defined as that group of independent pentecostal- and charismatic-like churches, fellowships, and ministries formed after 1959, remains an under-researched movement. In fact, the prosperity doctrine (emphasized in varying degrees in neopentecostal circles), is about the only aspect of the movement which has received substantial academic attention. It is because neopentecostalism has not evaporated (like so many of the religious sects begun in the 1960s), but continues to expand, that an analysis of its theology of mission is in order. To this task, this paper is dedicated.

The thesis is concerned with the following topics. Chapter One places neopentecostalism into its historical context, providing an overview of it and two related movements. Chapter Two introduces the organisations which function as our case studies. Behind each group is a formidable founder figure, whose biography, theology, and influence is sketched. In this interest of allowing the case study figures to speak for themselves, in as lucid and fair a style as possible, there is an intentional minimum of critique in this chapter. Chapters Three through Six are the theological heart of the thesis. In these chapters we compile, compare, and analyze the case study groups' understanding of the theology, aims, strategies, and ecumenism of mission. The resultant compilation is proposed as a uniquely neopentecostal theology of mission. Chapters Seven and Eight examine neopentecostalism in the larger context of society and Church. Finally, Chapter Nine is a summary chapter which highlights five elements of the proposed neopentecostal missiology and suggests that it be considered a distinct, new missiological paradigm for mission studies.

The scope of this thesis, then, is to explore and articulate the various dimensions of a neopentecostal theology of mission. The paper focuses on understanding what type of gospel is being preached by neopentecostal groups. It also attempts to understand how and why neopentecostals are conveying their gospel message. Necessarily excluded from the paper's analysis are the popular, but peripheral, issues of glossolalia and televangelism.

My biases as a researcher include an ecclesiastical background of varied hues, including shades of the Baptist, conservative Congregational, Episcopalian, Mennonite, and Methodist traditions. Of the pentecostal tradition I have had no long exposure, only church visits and a circle of pentecostal colleagues and friends. Several of my limitations as a researcher are obvious. I write from at least two steps beyond the movement of which I study; I write as an outsider to the movement and from a western perspective. On the other hand, I believe that at least two features add credibility to my research. First, my personal ecumenicity helps guard me from viewing neopentecostalism too narrowly, and second, the fact that I am not writing from within the movement protects me having to prove or justify any particular element of it.

I wish to acknowledge my abiding gratitude to a number of people for their assistance in the completion of this thesis. To my advisors, Andrew C. Ross and Andrew F. Walls, my thanks go for all their academic advise and encouragement. To both sets of my parents, the ^{cs}Dodges and the Nichols, my great appreciation goes for their very tangible encouragement and support. To our daughters, Joanna and Julia, my great appreciation for their reminder of what is really important in life. Finally, to my husband, John Horton, my greatest appreciation for all his loving support, especially through the dissertation days of Edinburgh.

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Chapter One

Twentieth Century Movements Emphasizing the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The Church in the 1990s is cautiously acknowledging its nearly one-quarter pentecostal/charismatic constituency. For many in the Church this "enthusiastic" wing of Christendom is an embarrassing enigma, and yet, until the 1980s or so, it has also been a group that has been easy to dismiss as ephemeral. However, the successful evangelistic efforts of pentecostals, in particular, have meant that pentecostal Christianity can no longer be overlooked by the Church.

Since the 1960s, an increasing percentage of pentecostal/charismatic Christianity has been represented by independent pentecostal- and charismatic-like churches and ministries, groups which herein are referred to as *neopentecostal*. Because it has developed alongside of, and drawn some of its participants from, the charismatic renewal, and because its theology often resembles that of classic pentecostalism, neopentecostalism is only just now beginning to be recognised as a separate movement. This thesis assumes neopentecostalism to be a distinct and identifiable new religious movement. Its ecclesiastical independency sets neopentecostalism apart as a distinct movement. Before we can proceed in our study of neopentecostalism, we must first clarify the terminology of the larger pentecostal/charismatic movement.

Nomenclature

The purpose of this section is to develop an efficient system of reference and terminology concerning the independent pentecostal-like churches and sects which have come into existence since 1960. This is a particularly tricky task because the terms already in existence are numerous, nonspecific, and are often used interchangeably.¹ The descriptive terms for these independent churches include all of the following: "neopentecostals," "independent charismatics," "transdenominational ministries," "independent ministries," and "nondenominational Spirit-filled assemblies."² Before we can classify these "independents", however, we will need working definitions of the terms "pentecostal" and "charismatic."

A *pentecostal* is "a person affiliated with a denomination, church, or fellowship which adheres to the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism". Holy Spirit baptism is a work of grace following

Christian conversion, which pentecostals say is clearly proved by the subsequent supernatural gift of *glossalalia* (speaking in a previously unknown language). This insistence on *glossalalia* as a sign of Holy Spirit baptism is a common and distinguishing characteristic of pentecostalism.³

The term *classic pentecostal* was coined by the Catholic scholar Kilian McDonnell in the mid-1960s to further distinguish those members of the earliest pentecostal denominations. Early pentecostal denominations are considered to be those formed between 1906-1930, and include such groups as the Apostolic Faith Church, the Assemblies of God, and the Church of God in Christ. While some classic pentecostals are still characterized by, and take pride in, a strict and narrowly defined moral code, other classic pentecostals have relaxed these requirements. Therefore, a rigidly defined moral code is no longer a distinctive mark of classic pentecostalism.

Charismatic most commonly refers to "a member of one of the historic churches, either Roman Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant, who readily attest to the undiminished presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the attendant 'gifts of the Spirit'". A charismatic often, but not always, advocates the necessity of Holy Spirit baptism and is less likely than a pentecostal to insist on *glossalalia* as evidence of this experience.⁴ Although they are sometimes called "neopentecostals", charismatics do not, as a rule, identify themselves as pentecostals; similarly, pentecostals do not identify themselves as charismatics.

Usually included under the charismatic category are hundreds of thousands of nondenominational or independent charismatic churches and fellowships. It is from this group of independent charismatic churches that the core of a new category, which we shall term "neopentecostals", is proposed.⁵ For the purposes of this enquiry, *neopentecostals* will refer to "members of this group of independent charismatic or pentecostal-like churches and sects which has emerged since 1960". After a description of "neopentecostals", we will consider the advantages of the new category.

Although neopentecostals will affirm some, if not most, of the tenets of classic pentecostalism, neopentecostals are affiliated with a denomination, church, or fellowship founded since 1960. Neopentecostals often have their roots in other church traditions, and are subsequently drawn from other denominations into a neopentecostal church, whereas classic pentecostals have more often grown up in that tradition. Also, neopentecostals tend to be less legalistic with regard to moral codes than classic pentecostals.

Neopentecostalism is characterized by independent churches with a conglomerate of affiliated ministries such as Bible schools, mass media, and literature production. The Rhema Bible Church (Tulsa, Oklahoma; Johannesburg, South Africa; and Perth, Australia), the Vineyard Christian Fellowship (Southern California and world-wide), and the Deeper Life Christian Church (Lagos, Nigeria and world-wide) are all models of the neopentecostal church. Independent healing evangelists are another prominent feature of neopentecostalism; of these, Reinhard Bonnke is one of the most well known.

There are several advantages to describing as neopentecostal these churches and sects which heretofore have been categorized under the wider heading, independent charismatic. One advantage of the title, neopentecostal, is that the vast majority of independent churches reflect the pentecostal tradition. This is not surprising when we consider that many of their ministers and leaders have had some past affiliation or experience with pentecostalism.⁶ This is true for all four leaders of our case study groups; Hagin and Cunningham were affiliated with the Assemblies of God, Kumuyi with the Apostolic Faith Church, and Bonnke with the Federation of Free Pentecostal Churches and the Apostolic Faith Mission. Therefore, the term, neopentecostalism, is helpful in that it acknowledges the pentecostal influences in the movement. Yet it should be noted that while these "independents" share theology, fellowship and a common tradition with both pentecostals and charismatics, they are, in fact, a separate movement.

Another reason for re-classifying "independent charismatics" as "neopentecostals" is that they now compose a distinct and large enough movement to merit their own title. Their being subsumed under the heading "charismatic" is not only inaccurate, it is misleading. For example, the "independent charismatic" churches in North America represent the fastest growing segment of North American Christianity, with their size estimated at somewhere between 60-100,000 congregations.⁷ Further, statistician David Barratt believes that there are approximately 3000 independent charismatic denominations world-wide.⁸ The size of the independent charismatic constituency, then, is another reason why this group requires the separate ecclesiastical status of *neopentecostal*.

One final reason for categorizing independents under the heading *neopentecostal* is that the term neopentecostal has not been favoured, historically, by charismatics themselves. Apparently, the designation *neopentecostal* was applied to charismatics by outside observers in the early 1960s; charismatics immediately responded to this label by stating their preference for the term *charismatic*.⁹ Therefore, because the term *neopentecostal* is not self-descriptive of the

charismatic movement, it could be applied more beneficially to this new category of independent charismatics.

For all of these reasons, we will use the term *neopentecostals* in this paper to mean "those people affiliated with an independent pentecostal-like church or sect founded after 1959". When there is a significant overlapping of neopentecostal and pentecostal theology or practice it will be noted by the term *neo/pentecostal*.¹⁰

In order to further clarify the term neopentecostal we need to distinguish it from two additional descriptive terms, "evangelical" and "fundamentalist". While they share some theological ground, these three traditions are quite distinct. It is quite inaccurate to use the terms evangelical, fundamentalist, and neopentecostal interchangeably. While evangelicals and fundamentalists share many doctrinal convictions, the two groups are characterised by different theological emphases. Historically, evangelicals have stressed the necessity of a definite conversion experience while fundamentalists have stressed correct doctrine and biblical inerrancy. Fundamentalists more often assert that the Bible is to be read and interpreted literally, that it is without error, and that its apparent textual discrepancies can be resolved. Evangelicals, however, are more open to a variety of biblical interpretations and to the suggestion that minor textual discrepancies can be explained by errors in human transcription.

At this point we can make several concluding comparisons between all the groups mentioned thus far. Classic pentecostals and neopentecostals will identify with the biblical literalism and social conservatism of fundamentalism. However, the key doctrinal difference between neo/pentecostals and fundamentalists is the historic hermeneutical difference in understanding the "gifts of the Holy Spirit" described in 1 Corinthians 14-16. Fundamentalists believe that the miraculous gifts of tongues, healing, and prophecy ended with the Apostolic Age. Conversely, neo/pentecostals enthusiastically aver that these miraculous gifts never ceased, and are still bestowed upon believers by the Holy Spirit. The older evangelical churches are usually reticent to whole-heartedly endorse either camp, avoiding both the fundamentalist views of biblical inerrancy and the neo/pentecostal emphasis on miraculous spiritual gifts.¹¹ We now turn our attention to an introductory overview of three twentieth century movements which emphasize the Holy Spirit.

Classic Pentecostalism

"...there are three or four elements and three parties involved in Christian conversion-initiation. Each of these elements and parties could be said to be the characteristic emphasis of each of the three main streams of Christianity. Catholics emphasize the role of the Church and of water-baptism (and laying on of hands); Protestants emphasize the role of the individual and of preaching and faith; Pentecostals emphasize the role of Jesus Christ as Baptizer in the Spirit and of Spirit-baptism...Where Catholics fastened on to the objectivity of the sacraments, Protestants fastened on to the objectivity of the Bible...Like earlier 'enthusiasts', Pentecostals have reacted against both these extremes. Against the mechanical sacramentalism of extreme Catholicism and the dead biblicist orthodoxy of extreme Protestantism they have shifted the focus of attention to the *experience* of the Spirit. Our examination of the NT evidence has shown that they were wholly justified in this. That the Spirit, and particularly the gift of the Spirit, was a *fact of experience* in the lives of the earliest Christians has been too obvious to require elaboration."

James D. G. Dunn, 1970¹²

Pentecostals insist that the Holy Spirit's empowering is the *sine qua non* for the existence and continuity of the twentieth century pentecostal movement. The theological seeds of pentecostalism were sown during the late nineteenth century by proponents of the holiness movement both in Europe and in the United States. In turn, their holiness doctrine was derived in part from the eighteenth century theology of John Wesley, the father of Methodism. Both the holiness movement and Wesley's theology foreshadowed the pentecostal movement in that they were distinct in their emphasis on a second, definable religious experience following conversion. Although historically the terminology varies, the experience and the resultant theology of a "second blessing" or the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" advocated by twentieth century pentecostals can be traced back to similar emphases in the holiness movement and in the writings of Wesley.

The theological convictions of John Wesley included experiential elements which were an unwelcome intrusion in the cerebral and very formal Church of England of his day. In the earlier years of his ministry, Wesley preached assurance of God's justification as a necessary aspect of Christian experience.¹³ The immanence of God through the Holy Spirit, characterized by Wesley's insistence on the palpable "witness of the spirit" earned him the contemptible label of an "enthusiast".¹⁴

Some of Wesley's theological emphases are similar to that of present day pentecostalism. The pneumatology apparent in the writings of John Wesley foreshadows the pneumatology advocated by twentieth century pentecostals:

"...so all power is in the Spirit of God. And therefore every man, in order to believe unto salvation, must receive the Holy Ghost. This is essentially necessary to every

Christian, not in order to his working miracles, but in order to faith, peace, joy, and love—the ordinary fruits of the Spirit. Although no man on earth can explain the particular manner wherein the Spirit of God works on the soul, yet whosoever has these fruits, cannot but know and *feel* that God has wrought them in his heart."¹⁵

As well, the pentecostal notion of receiving a "second blessing" or being "filled with the Holy Spirit" found some of its inspiration in Wesley's teaching on Christian perfection. Throughout his ministry, Wesley taught a "second work of grace" or "Christian perfection" which could come to a Christian both gradually and instantaneously:

"From the moment we are justified, there may be a gradual sanctification, a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God. And if sin cease before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change; there must be a last moment wherein it does exist, and a first moment wherein it does not." But should we in preaching insist both on one and the other? Certainly we must insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the instantaneous also? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? and then rather, because constant experience shows, the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their soul... They are "saved by hope."¹⁶

Like present day pentecostals, proponents of the holiness movement were drawn from numerous ecclesiastical backgrounds but shared the belief in a "second blessing" theology. In fact, by the end of the Holiness Movement the phrase "baptism in the Holy Ghost" had become a stock phrase within churches affected by the movement.¹⁷

A leader in the Wesleyan holiness movement, Phoebe Palmer (1807-1874) espoused (and somewhat distorted) the Wesleyan theological tradition of Christian perfection. "Entire sanctification" was taught as a necessary part of true Christian living:

"Thus, under the Christian dispensation, the entire sanctification of spirit, soul, and body takes place the moment the entire being is laid believingly upon the Christian altar... The strength of Christ is imparted to the soul that relies wholly upon Him... It is only by a careful, constant, and entire reliance on Christ, that holiness can be retained."¹⁸

However, not all branches of the holiness movement are directly traceable to Methodism. Holiness advocates belonging to non-Wesleyan denominations often espoused the teachings of the Keswick Convention for the Promotion of Practical Holiness. From 1875, Keswick's centre in England's Lake District was a gathering spot for proponents of the holiness movement. Unlike the Wesleyan contingent, Keswickians were not convinced that entire sanctification was possible; instead, they taught that the best a Christian could achieve was the suppression of sinful desire. However, Keswickian theology did include a second blessing motif. Chapter seven of R. A.

Torrey's book, *What the Bible Teaches*, is entitled "The Baptism With the Holy Spirit". Torrey writes:

"The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a definite experience of which one may and ought to know whether he has received it or not. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is an operation of the Holy Spirit distinct from and subsequent and additional to His regenerating work. A man may be regenerated by the Holy Spirit and still not be Baptized with the Holy Spirit. In regeneration there is an impartation of life, and the one who receives it is saved; in the Baptism with the Holy Spirit there is an impartation of power and the one who receives it is fitted for service."¹⁹

With such a clearly defined second blessing theology already in circulation by the late nineteenth century, it is understandable why many holiness advocates were attracted to pentecostal churches in the early twentieth century. As has been pointed out in a recent spate of scholarship, Torrey's version of holiness was derived from the Reformed, and not the Wesleyan, tradition.²⁰ Therefore, the Reformed version of holiness may also, alongside the Wesleyan tradition, be considered as foreshadowing the twentieth century pentecostal movement, though that titillating inquiry is beyond our present scope.

Having examined some of the theological intimations for twentieth century pentecostalism, we now turn our attention to the geographical dimensions of what pentecostals call the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" during the first decade of the twentieth century. It is important to note at this point that the pentecostal movement did not spring from any one source nor can any one person be called its founder; "but [it] was a spontaneous revival appearing almost simultaneously in various parts of the world."²¹

The revival which is most often cited as *the* source of the pentecostal movement is the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, which spanned the years 1906 to 1913. There are several reasons why this particular revival is so often featured in the literature. One reason is its longevity; the Azusa Street revival lasted, in varying degrees of intensity, about seven years. Another reason for its historical prominence is that it served as a spiritual hub which drew numbers of visitors, including many ministers, from around the world. When these men and women "took the Spirit" back to their countries, Azusa Street's fame naturally spread. A final reason for the prominence of the Azusa Street revival is related to the fact that, even today, the bulk of academic literature concerning revivals has come from the west, in particular the USA. Naturally, the Azusa Street revival figures highly in these publications. But there were other, sometimes overlapping, revivals in several locations between 1900-1910. Several European countries as well as India, Chile and North America reported "outpourings of the Spirit" during this decade.

There was one in Wales in the year 1904. Spearheaded by the preaching of a Welshman, Evan Roberts, the revival saw over 100.000 converts, "the vast majority of whom remained true to the end".²² The Welsh revival affected not only the spiritual climate of Wales and the rest of Britain but it:

"was the farthest-reaching of all the movements of the Awakening, for it affected the whole evangelical cause in India, Korea and China, renewed revivals in Japan and South Africa, and sent a wave of awakening over Africa, Latin America and the South Seas."²³

Interestingly, it was first upon the orphaned girls and not upon the missionaries of the Ramabai Mukti Mission in India that the Holy Spirit was reportedly "poured out" in 1907. Although the missionaries were sceptical of the events:

"ultimately...they were compelled to recognize the hand of God, and humbly sought for themselves a similar blessing. God did not disappoint them, and many missionaries of various denominations received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with signs following."²⁴

The events at Ramabai Mukti Mission were not the only such reported in India at this time; accounts of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were also reported in several other Indian states.

One of the earliest documented reports of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the United States came from Topeka, Kansas in 1901. An evangelist with a holiness history, Charles F. Parham, had organized an interdenominational Bible school called Bethel College, where he explored with his students the question of Holy Spirit baptism and its evidences. On January 1, 1901, one of his students, Agnes Ozman, was baptized with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in tongues. In the days which followed, more students, and Parham himself, had experienced Holy Spirit baptism; an experience which they felt was verified by their ability to speak in tongues. The Topeka Revival is perceived by pentecostals as significant because it was the first in a series which can be linked to the Azusa Street revival. From 1901, Parham continued to formulate, teach and preach a distinctively pentecostal theology in his Bible schools in Topeka and Houston; these ideas were also circulated via his periodical, *Apostolic Faith*. One of those who attended Parham's Houston Bible school for several weeks was a holiness evangelist by the name of William J. Seymour; Seymour is the man whose name is most often connected with events at Azusa Street.

We now can link Seymour with the revival in Los Angeles. Having read S. B. Shaw's *The Great Revival in Wales* in 1905 and 1906, many holiness-oriented Christians in the Los Angeles

area began to establish cottage prayer meetings where they sought God for a Welsh-style revival among the churches of southern California.²⁵ On February 22, 1906, William J. Seymour arrived in Los Angeles, having been invited by holiness advocates who had lost their membership at the Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles because of their pentecostal leanings. Seymour began his ministry among these people by conducting a regular Bible study and prayer meeting. Within weeks, on April 9, 1906, several of their fellowship had spoken in tongues. An old Methodist church at 312 Azusa Street was rented out and services of spontaneous singing and sermons, accompanied by prayer and speaking in tongues, continued unabated for several years. One of the unique, but short-lived, phenomena of the revival was its racially mixed constituency. William Seymour was black, many of his associates were white, and the congregation varied through the years with different percentages of black, white, hispanic, and Asian participants.²⁶ The core constituency of the Azusa Street revival numbered between fifty and sixty persons, but up to several hundred visitors were drawn during the peak years of 1906-08 and 1911.

Although it stretched over many years and directly affected hundreds of people, the revival is most significant for acting as fuel for the numerous pentecostal fires which it sparked in several countries early in the decade. Among the many affected by Azusa Street was T. B. Barratt, the Methodist pastor who is responsible for introducing the pentecostal movement to Norway. During an extended stay in New York, Barratt corresponded with the mission, believing he had experienced the baptism in the Spirit:

"but Azusa Street informed him that 'the tongues' were necessary, and on the 15 November 1906, Barratt...received the gift of speaking with tongues and singing in the Spirit. Thenceforward he became an ardent pentecostal believer."²⁷

Barratt took his pentecostal faith back to Norway that same year. By 1911, from its Norwegian base, pentecostalism had spread to the rest of Scandinavia as well as to Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland.

Undoubtedly, the Welsh Revival had left a small fire burning in the British Isles, but it was not until the visit of T. B. Barratt that the Pentecostal Movement really penetrated British soil.²⁸ A desire for the baptism of the Holy Spirit led the English pastor Alexander A. Boddy to seek out Barratt in Norway in 1907. Although a small number of his congregation had experienced the gift of *glossalalia*, Boddy was praying for a wide-scale outpouring of the Spirit. Invited by Boddy in September of that same year, 1907, Barratt arrived in England and held a Sunday evening service at All Saint's Parish Church in Sunderland:

"The service was followed by a prayer meeting in the vestry, where many received marked blessings, and a few came through to a scriptural baptism in the Holy Ghost 'for we heard them speak with tongues and magnify God'. That meeting continued until 4 a.m. on Monday morning."²⁹

We see from this sequence of events that through just one man, T. B. Barratt, Azusa Street pentecostalism was introduced to many European countries.

What shape has pentecostalism assumed since the global revivals at the turn of the century? Around the world, many pentecostal assemblies were formed when existing denominations forced pentecostal sympathizers from their midst. Through the years, as well, pentecostal denominations have been formed as a result of in-house doctrinal differences and personality clashes. The scores of pentecostal denominations in the USA today may also be linked to the numerous holiness denominations extant circa 1900, and to the fact that the majority of Azusa Street participants were American. Many of those touched by the "new teaching" of Azusa Street either attempted, often unsuccessfully, a "pentecostalization" of an existing denomination or started their own. For example, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Church of God in Christ, and the International Pentecostal Holiness Church are contemporary pentecostal churches with a holiness history. Two North American pentecostal denominations with clear links to Azusa Street are the Apostolic Faith Mission and the Assemblies of God. The Apostolic Faith Mission, located in Portland, Oregon, was organized in 1907 as a direct product of Seymour's mission in Los Angeles. The Assemblies of God is the largest pentecostal denomination in the world. It was formed in Arkansas in 1914, by men with various pentecostal backgrounds, many of whom had links with Parham's Apostolic Faith movement.

Whether offshoots of the holiness tradition or fruits of the Azusa Street revival, pentecostal denominations have blossomed luxuriantly through the twentieth century. According to statistician David Barrett, in 1990 there were an estimated 194 million pentecostals world-wide. These 194 million pentecostals were represented by approximately 11,000 denominations. The proliferation of pentecostal denominations is not unique to North America; Barrett reports that there are over 750 third-world pentecostal denominations (unrelated to foreign missions from Western denominations, yet often schisms out of them) in 140 third-world countries. In comparison, there are approximately 690 pentecostal denominations in the West. While almost all of these Western denominations have white USA origins, they are now present in over 200 countries around the world.³⁰

Pentecostalism has made significant inroads in the restricted access nations of China and the Soviet Union. In 1990 there were an estimated 50 million pentecostal house church Christians in China; this is an astounding increase from the 800,000 reported in 1970.³¹ Still facing harassment and persecution, these Chinese Christians meet primarily in clandestine house fellowships. Pentecostalism came to China in 1906 and, along with other Christian traditions, has grown rapidly through the century. It was estimated in 1985 that almost 25% of all Chinese Protestants were tongues speakers.³²

Although there were several pentecostal pioneers during Russia's imperial years, the man generally acknowledged as the father of modern Soviet pentecostalism is the late, Russian Baptist minister, Ivan Voronaev. Voronaev experienced Holy Spirit baptism in 1919 while pastoring a Russian Baptist congregation in New York, and within a year he had returned to his native land to preach the pentecostal gospel. Using Odessa as a base, Voronaev founded hundreds of pentecostal churches during the 1920s, despite continual resistance by both communists and Baptists.³³ Since the twenties, Russian pentecostalism, like all Russian Christianity, has persevered and grown in the face of persecution. Today, pentecostals in the Soviet Union are thought to number approximately 130,000.³⁴

In all likelihood, the statistics on the size of world-wide pentecostalism are on the low side of reality, for, as Hollenweger notes in his classic work, *The Pentecostals* "there are large Pentecostal bodies which are unknown to the pentecostals themselves, and about the size of which they have no information."³⁵ These "hidden" pentecostal assemblies are likely to be found where neo/pentecostalism is growing the fastest, in Africa and Latin America. A continued surge of pentecostal church growth in the 1990s is likely to contribute further to the uncertainty.

What factors have contributed to the rapid growth of pentecostalism? One reason will suffice at this point: pentecostalism's emphasis on evangelisation. In his article, "The Azusa Street Revival and Twentieth-Century Missions", Gary McGee examines the direct impact of the Azusa Street Revival on the Christian world mission. He concludes that the Azusa Street participants viewed the pentecostal baptism of the Spirit as an empowerment for Christian witness. He also states his own belief that the gifts of the Spirit, *including* tongues, interpretations, prophecies, and divine healings, were given to aid in the advancement of the Gospel. Additionally, he asserts that the Pentecostal "outpouring" is a catalyst for missionary service; an assertion he backed up with action when he enthusiastically left for missionary service on foreign soil by faith (without pledged financial support).³⁶ McGee's argument, then, is that pentecostalism has been, since its inception, an evangelistically- oriented movement.³⁷ The

1990 estimate of 1.1 million full-time pentecostal and charismatic missionaries world-wide clearly suggests that this enthusiasm for "soul-winning" has continued to the present day.³⁸ Classic pentecostals, then, are characterized by their commitment to spread the pentecostal gospel. It is a gospel which distinctively, but not exclusively, proclaims that Christ saves and the Holy Spirit empowers in the apostolic manner. The size of the world-wide pentecostal communion and the zeal of pentecostal missionaries are evidences of the intensity of their commitment.

Having examined pentecostal origins, we turn finally to identify any distinguishing theological characteristics of classic pentecostalism. Are there any theological convictions which set classic pentecostals apart from their ecclesiastical peers? In the minds of many pentecostals the answer to this question is "no, there is nothing distinctive in pentecostalism's theology, only in its experience". David duPlessis explains:

"The Pentecostal revival today is merely a restoration of a personal experience of a life-changing salvation followed by the receiving of the Baptism into the Holy Spirit with the evidence or confirmation of the initial manifestation of speaking in unknown tongues, which in turn is usually followed by experiences of power to cast out devils, heal the sick and miracles. There was never a question of educating or training the people to do certain things. All are taught that it is done by the Holy Spirit, Who will manifest Himself in a supernatural and miraculous way through the lives of all who receive Him, be they laymen or clergy."³⁹

While duPlessis and other pentecostals assert that these spiritual experiences are nothing new, but only a restoration of earlier experiences, it must be admitted that in twentieth century Christianity, belief in such experiences is largely peculiar to pentecostal-type theology. This is a theology which holds that the miraculous gifts bestowed upon the disciples and apostles of the early Church (Acts 2.4 ff.) continue to be bestowed upon followers of Christ today. Many non-pentecostal denominations teach that the era of miraculous gifts for ministry is a feature unique to the apostolic age, and that this miraculous era ended with the death of the last apostle. However, classic pentecostals draw no ecclesio-historical line between the apostolic age and the present.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit followed by supernatural evidence is normative in pentecostal theology. This supernatural evidence includes certain spiritual gifts like speaking, singing or praying in tongues, interpreting tongues, prophecy, spiritual discernment, divine healing, and instantaneous sanctification. For the pentecostal Christian, the crucial verification, or the "initial evidence", of Holy Spirit baptism is the ability to speak in tongues. Although the gift of tongues immediately following Holy Spirit baptism is most desirable and seen as normative, for some pentecostals the gift of tongues comes much later. For others, it is bestowed immediately, but as a one-time-only experience. Although most pentecostal denominations teach that all members

must have received the gift of tongue speaking, in reality only about 35% of all pentecostals have practiced this gift either initially or as an ongoing experience.⁴⁰

Although it is not unique to pentecostalism, a premillennial eschatology has also historically characterized classic pentecostalism. There is a humorous anecdote which illustrates the seriousness with which this doctrine was taken. It is said that when the Azusa Street leader, W. J. Seymour, decided to marry in 1908, he was opposed (unsuccessfully) by two members of his leadership team, Clara Lum and Florence Crawford, on the grounds that there was such a short amount of time before the rapture of the Church!⁴¹ As this family tale suggests, teachings that the imminent return of Christ will be followed by a one thousand year reign of Christ on earth, was, from the beginning, taken literally and seriously. One aspect of this eschatology which can be seen as uniquely pentecostal is the belief that the twentieth century outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a fulfilment of one of the biblical prophecies concerning the end of time. It is reasoned that because God's Spirit has already been poured out, in fulfilment of Joel 2.28ff, the return of Christ must be imminent. However, this sense of immediacy has faded with the passing of time.⁴²

The Charismatic Renewal

"Until lately other Protestants regarded the Movement as a temporary and passing phenomenon, not worth much attention. Now there is a growing, serious recognition of its true dimensions and probable permanence. The tendency to dismiss its Christian message as inadequate is being replaced by a chastened readiness to investigate the secrets of its mighty sweep."⁴³

Henry P. Van Dusen in *Life* magazine, 1958

"We cannot afford to treat lightly or to dismiss as peripheral a movement which is concerned precisely with this objective, the renewal of spiritual life in itself. It spreads throughout the Christian world as a living impulse, unforced by an ecclesiastical authority, and seems in a way to be the renewal destined to give the breath of life to the other, more official renewals."⁴⁴

David Parry, 1979

How accurately van Dusen foreshadowed the charismatic renewal which continues to grow some thirty years later! Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches have all felt the enthusiasm of charismatic constituencies, and their responses to this renewal movement have ranged from an outright condemnation of a "satanic element" within their midst to an exuberant celebration of a "new wind of the Spirit" among them.

We remember that the terms *charismatic renewal* and *charismatic* are defined as those groups and individuals outside a classic pentecostal denomination and *within an historic church tradition* who have experienced typically pentecostal phenomena such as the baptism in the Holy Spirit and/or who have sought and received supernatural gifts of the Spirit like tongues, prophecy, and divine healing.⁴⁵

The advent of the world-wide charismatic movement is usually heralded by the 1960 events at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California; this is, indeed, an adequate starting point. There are, however, some important historical clues which can be viewed as preparatory agents for the charismatic renewal in the traditional churches.

Up until the late 1940s in the United States, the ministers of mainline Protestant congregations who had received the baptism of the Spirit were forced to resign; these ministers either established an independent ministry or joined a Pentecostal body.⁴⁶ Harald Bredesen (Lutheran) in 1946, Tommy Tyson (United Methodist) in 1951, Richard Winkler (Episcopalian) in 1956, and James Brown (Presbyterian) also in 1956, were some of the first ministers to remain within their denominations after receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷

It was through the independent ministries of pentecostal healing evangelists like Oral Roberts and Gordon Lindsay, and interdenominational charismatic fellowships, in particular Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, that many American Christians of the 1940s and 1950s were introduced to pentecostal worship and doctrine.⁴⁸ Through these men and ministries a sizeable number of Christians belonging to the historic denominations were baptized in the Holy Spirit. As a rule, these mainline charismatics were not encouraged to join a pentecostal body; instead, they were encouraged to share their experiences within their own church tradition.

It was in this manner, from within, that the charismatic tradition began. It was not really until after the St. Mark's incident that the charismatic renewal was formally acknowledged as a force at work within most American mainline Protestant denominations. It is to the St. Mark's story that we now turn.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church was just one of several Episcopal parishes in Southern California which had been experiencing spiritual renewal among a small group of its clergy and laity. Since 1959, groups from the Holy Spirit Parish in Monterey

Park and St. Luke's in Monrovia, as well as St. Mark's, had experienced Holy Spirit baptism and the accompanying gifts of tongues, interpretation and prophecy. Strange stories began to circulate about the experiences of these Episcopalians. In order to quell false rumors, Dennis Bennett, then rector of St. Mark's, shared his pentecostal-like experiences with his parish:

"On that Passion Sunday, 1960, I did what I should have done five months before...I set aside the preaching schedule for the day, and went into the pulpit at the three morning services and simply shared what had happened to me. The general reaction was open and tender-until the end of the second service. At that point my second assistant snatched off his vestments, threw them on the altar, and stalked out of the church crying, "I can no longer work with this man!"....When one of my vestry men, a leader of the 'opposition', came to me and said bluntly: "You should resign!" I was ready to do so."⁴⁹

Within several months Bennett's resignation and the nascent "movement of the Spirit" within the historical denominations became world news when one of Bennett's parishioners, a Jean Stone, contacted the periodicals *Time* and *Newsweek* with the story. By the mid 1960s, nearly every major historic denomination in the USA had members who claimed to have experienced baptism in the Spirit.

Charismatic renewal has spread across the globe since the mid 1960s. The Canadian charismatic renewal movement began in connection with an Episcopal parish in British Columbia in 1961 and is strongest today within the United Church. By the end of the 1970s, the renewal had spread significantly across Europe and Latin America. Although the charismatic renewal peaked in the late 1970s, it still claimed, in 1990, 141 million participants worldwide.⁵⁰

Catholic charismatics point to favourable statements issued by Vatican II (1962-1965) as setting the stage for the Catholic renewal movement. For example, a clear affirmation of a variety of spiritual gifts is found in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* :

"It is not only through the sacraments and Church ministries that the same Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the People of God and enriches it with virtues. Allotting His gifts "to everyone according as He will" (I Co 12.11), He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank...These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation, for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church."⁵¹

Charismatic Catholic activity traces its roots to a small prayer group started by two lay faculty members at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1967. The two men's search for increased spiritual power led them to read pentecostal literature, like David Wilkerson's *The Cross and the Switchblade* and John Sherrill's *They Speak in Other Tongues*, and to talk with local pentecostals. During an Episcopalian prayer group, on the 20 January 1967, the two men received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with little accompanying emotion. The following week two more faculty colleagues experienced the "baptism".⁵² On the weekend of 18-19 February 1967, at a gathering of 20-30 Duquesne faculty and students, more members of the group received the baptism of the Spirit; many also received the gifts of tongues, prophecy, discernment, and exorcism of demons.⁵³ From Duquesne, the renewal spread, within weeks, to the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, and to the Catholic student group at Michigan State University; from these geographic points it spread across America and around the world.

The structure of the Catholic renewal movement is based primarily upon small groups and communities of believers. Unlike the Protestant charismatic renewal, which has transformed entire congregations, the Catholic renewal has affected only a few *entire* parishes; instead, it remains essentially an affiliation of parish prayer groups.⁵⁴ Catholic renewal communities, such as the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Michigan and the Mary Sisters in Darmstadt, West Germany, and Catholic renewal conferences have been copied by charismatics from many traditions.

Through the years, over 100 countries have taken part in the Catholic renewal movement. France has a significant number of participants, an estimated 500.000 in 1987. Participation in Latin America was estimated at 2 million in 21 countries in 1987; the United States had drawn about 250.00 people in 6000 groups by the mid 1980s.⁵⁵

The charismatic renewal is characterized by its pentecostal-type theology. Most notable is its affirmation that the Holy Spirit is moving in the world today, gifting Christians with real, tangible power. Other emphases of the renewal, remarkably similar to those of pentecostalism, are a heightened interest in the person and name of Jesus, the reading of the Bible, active evangelism, and eschatological immanency. There appears to be a similar pattern of worship, especially in the overlapping hymnody and "praise songs", which allow charismatics and pentecostals around the world to feel a spiritual kinship.

The most persistent objections to the charismatic movement have come from the world-wide Orthodox communion and from various Protestant denominations including North America's largest, the Southern Baptist Convention. The main objection put forth by the Orthodox leadership is that the renewal is primarily a Protestant phenomenon. The small number of Orthodox advocates who have voiced charismatic empathies are usually forced to leave the Church. The Southern Baptist objections to the renewal are doctrinal; the issues relate to the renewal's authenticity and necessity.⁵⁶ There is, however, a growing number (approximately 400 in 1988) of Southern Baptist churches which gently advocate the charismatic movement by softening its terminology, using, for example, "fulness" in place of "charismatic".⁵⁷

As a unifier of heterogeneous Church traditions, the charismatic renewal has been quite successful. Since experience, and not theology, is the common denominator, charismatic renewal gatherings are focused on the experience of the Holy Spirit's power. As we will see in chapter five, the renewal has already contributed much to the ecumenical vision of the larger Church.

The Neopentecostal Movement

Unlike the pentecostal and charismatic movements, the neopentecostal movement has no seminal person nor event to mark its beginning. As a movement consisting of newer churches which have incorporated various pentecostal elements, neopentecostalism has gained increasingly in popularity and definition since the 1960s, particularly in Africa and the United States.

In America, neopentecostalism is well-rooted in the tradition of ecclesiastical independency. There is a formidable religious genealogy of American independent church movements including Pilgrims, Quakers, Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Wesleyans. The aforementioned independent healing evangelists of the 1940s and 1950s were significant as role models for many young pentecostal ministers of the 1950s and 1960s; much of their theology as well as their ministry style was imbibed by present day neopentecostal ministers like Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin.⁵⁸

In Africa, the growing presence and ready acceptance of contemporary neopentecostalism is more easily understood with a knowledge of the continent's extremely rich and colourful ecclesiastical tapestry. Since the late nineteenth century,

much of this tapestry has been woven with threads representing the African Independent Church tradition. It would be erroneous, however, to view neopentecostalism in Africa as a direct descendent of the African Independent Church movement. Whereas much of the African Independent Church tradition is truly indigenous, African neopentecostalism has drawn much of its initial inspiration from America and Europe.⁵⁹ The only point to be made at this juncture is that the African Independent Churches have provided the neopentecostal movement a *precedent for acceptance*. With rich and varied traditions of independent churches and ministries woven across their ecclesiastical tapestries, Africa and the United States, then, can view the presence of the contemporary neopentecostal movement in their midst as the predictable continuation of a tradition.

There is little historical precedent for neopentecostalism in Europe and Latin America and this void can be seen as one reason for its slower acceptance and growth on these continents, particularly in Europe. Making assessment difficult in Latin America is the fact that some neopentecostal groups use denominational names without maintaining any real links with that ecclesiastical body; this appears to be a means by which some independent churches identify with the larger pentecostal movement. The strength of the various state churches and the Roman Catholic Church in Europe and Latin America, respectively, have, as well, made some tangible efforts to keep these "suspicious" younger movements at a safe distance. Pentecostal enthusiasm on these continents is largely expressed through either the Catholic and Protestant renewal movements or the official, older pentecostal channels such as the Assemblies of God or Elim Church.⁶⁰

A small yet significant expression of British neopentecostalism is the "house church movement". The movement is linked to a series of conferences held in the late 1950s and early 1960s by D. Lillie and A. Wallis. The "restoration" of the New Testament Church is thematically central to the house church movement; a distinctive conviction of the movement is the necessity of restoring two forgotten ministries, those of apostles and prophets.⁶¹ The movement claimed an estimated 95,000 members in 1987; attendance at their meetings, however, considerably exceeds this figure and could be as high as 120,000.⁶²

Notoriously amorphous, the size of the world-wide neopentecostal movement is contained within the 1990 estimate of 406 million professing pentecostal/charismatic Christians. Barrett does categorise a group of approximately 20 million "independent

charismatics" which are likely to fit our definition of *neopentecostal*.⁶³ More important than raw figures is *neopentecostalism's* rapid growth rate. In a study of growth rates of all world religions between 1970-1985, Barrett found that Protestant *neopentecostals* (as distinguished from denominational charismatics) had a growth rate of 16.39%. In contrast, during that same period, Christianity in general grew at 1.64% and Islam at 2.75%.⁶⁴

A positive theology emphasizing perfect health and realized wealth as God's will for a Christian is a common, but not universal, characteristic of *neopentecostalism*. Known as "positive confession theology", this doctrine is present in varying degrees in the ministries of men like Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, and Frederick K. C. Price, all of the United States. The Korean Paul Yonggi Cho and Nigerians Benson Idahosa and William F. Kumuyi preach a similar theology. The students and literature of these influential men are responsible for successfully circulating positive confession theology across most of the globe.

When we exclude the positive confession stream, *neopentecostalism* is characterized by a mostly classical pentecostal theology, stressing the baptism of the Holy Spirit and its accompanying gifts. There are, however, some different emphases. *Neopentecostals* are more likely than their pentecostal colleagues to prominently feature the more "spectacular" spiritual gifts such as physical healings and prophetic utterances. As well, more so than in the pentecostal and charismatic traditions, *neopentecostalism's* leadership style is characterized by an authoritarian male who commands spiritual respect through his healing, evangelistic, and teaching abilities, and who operates with a weak accountability network.⁶⁵ We discuss these themes more fully and carefully in chapter three.

We see that the *neopentecostalism* is religiously well-connected. *Neopentecostalism* derives much of its strength from a wide variety of pentecostal personalities and themes, and it shares a spiritual kinship with participants in the charismatic renewal. *Neopentecostals* also see themselves, at the very least, as part of the universal corpus of "sanctified, Spirit-filled" Christians.

Having classified and clarified some of the twentieth century movements emphasizing the Holy Spirit, we are now ready, in Chapter Two, to focus our

concentration on four particular groups which will function as case studies for our study of neopentecostal missiology.

Chapter Two

The Case Study Groups

Introduction

Having provided the backdrop for our study of neopentecostal missiology in Chapter One, we are now ready to examine the four organisations which will serve as our case study groups. Chosen as our case studies are two churches, one mission agency, and one crusade evangelist. The two churches are the Rhema Bible Church and the Deeper Life Christian Church; the mission agency is Youth with a Mission (YWAM), and the crusade evangelist is Reinhard Bonnke.

Kenneth Hagin is the founder of our first case study group, Rhema. Hagin is esteemed by his followers as the "Father of the Faith Movement," a movement which has affected the spiritual lives of millions. Our second case study group is the Deeper Life Christian Church, which boasts Africa's largest single congregation, the Lagos congregation, which claims 50,000 members. There are satellite churches in every Nigerian state as well as Deeper Life missionaries at work in many other African countries, Europe, and North America. Our third case study group is a mission agency, Youth With A Mission (YWAM). In 1989, YWAM engaged over 17,000 short term, and 6,400 career, (those who have committed from 13 months to a lifetime) personnel. It is known as the world's largest short term mission agency. Our fourth case study focuses on the evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, who has established a popular revival and healing ministry across Africa. Crowds of between 100,000 and 500,000 are regularly drawn to his African crusades.

The underlying rationale for selecting these four organisations as case studies is that they represent an accurate cross-section of a diverse religious movement. The nature, location, and missiology of the groups were criteria in the selection process. By choosing two churches, a mission organisation, and a crusade evangelist, we can fairly represent the multifarious nature of neopentecostal missiology, a movement unified not by structure but by common desire to disseminate full-gospel Christianity. Representing the worldwide presence of neopentecostalism is accomplished in part by choosing two churches on two different continents whose ministerial arms now reach to at least three continents each. The remaining continents are touched by neopentecostalism in the form of YWAM and CfAN's missionary ministries. The range of neopentecostal missiology is represented by selecting groups that illustrate points along its spectrum. At one end is Rhema with its "health and wealth" benefits

focus; at the other end is YWAM with its "evangelism and practical concern" focus. Between these two extremes lie groups like Deeper Life and CfAN.

While in their diversity our case study groups illustrate the range of neopentecostal missiology, they also share common characteristics which identify them as neopentecostal. Among the distinguishing features shared by all four organisations is their individualistic tenor. Each of the four movements originated with one man's vision for a particular mission work, and to this day that man's name is synonymous with the movement. Hagin desired to inform believers of their rights and privileges as Christians; Kumuyi wanted to disciple people in the Christian faith; Cunningham wanted to see young people take the gospel to the earth's four corners, and Bonnke desired to see a "blood-washed Africa".

An ecclesiastically independent status is another distinguishing feature shared by all of our case study groups. All four men connected with our case study groups once had a denominational affiliation and chose to part paths with it. In their desire to carry out the independent ministries to which, they believe, they have been directed, Hagin, Kumuyi, Cunningham, and Bonnke are united.

Another distinguishing feature shared by our case study groups is their pentecostal-like missiology, particularly their pronounced pneumatology. While Rhema, Deeper Life, YWAM, and CfAN emphasize different facets of a full-gospel theology, they are in accord on the utter power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit's power which makes all things possible, whether it be conversion, promotion, healing, or illumination of a biblical text. However defined, life's greatest victories are linked to an unswerving belief in the power of the third member of the Trinity.

We are now ready to begin our introductions of the case study groups. We start with the Rhema Bible Church.

The Rhema Bible Church

Kenneth Hagin radiates "presence." Visitors to the Rhema ministry complex in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma are visibly reminded of that pervasive presence by the solid wall of his literature in the reception area. Less noticeable to the visitor, but more formidable, is the Hagin influence which is disseminated world-wide by the over 10,000 graduates of the Rhema Bible Training Centre. Hagin and his ministry are seminal in the modern "Faith Movement", a movement originating in the United States which stresses a "faith formula" for receiving health and wealth. Who is Kenneth Hagin and what is his gospel message?

Kenneth Erwin Hagin was born on 20 August 1917 in McKinney, Texas. Born prematurely and with a congenital heart defect, he was expected to live less than a day. Hagin's childhood was marked by physical and emotional instability. Unable to run and play, he was consistently weaker and smaller than other boys his age. His father deserted the family when Hagin was six, and his mother, due to failing health, sent him to live with her parents when he was nine. When he was well enough, Hagin attended Sunday school at the Baptist church.

By the age of fifteen, Hagin's physical condition had deteriorated to the point that he became totally bedridden. He remained in bed for the next sixteen months, periodically experiencing both physical and mental paralysis. It was in this sickly situation that Hagin had a deathbed conversion experience. This spiritual conversion was prompted by three successive, and literal (his vital signs had failed), "physical" deaths and experiences he calls descents into hell: "Then the inner man rushed out of my body and left my body lying dead, with eyes set and flesh cold."¹

In his book, *I Believe in Visions*, Hagin describes the first of the three descents into hell:

I went down, down, down until the lights of the earth faded away. . . The farther down I went, the blacker it became, until it was all blackness-I could not have seen my hand if it had been an inch in front of my eyes. And the farther down I went, the hotter and more stifling it became. Finally, far below me, I could see lights flickering on the walls of the caverns of the damned. The lights were caused by the fires of hell. The giant, white-crested orb of flame pulled me, drawing me as a magnet draws metal to itself. I did not want to go, but just as metal jumps to the magnet, my spirit was drawn to that place. I could not take my eyes off of it. The heat beat me in the face. Many years have gone by, yet I can see it just as clearly today as I saw it then. It is as fresh in my memory as if it just happened."²

Once at hell's gate, Hagin recounts:

"Coming to the entrance, I paused momentarily, because I did not want to go in. I sensed that one more foot, one more step, one more yard, and I would be gone forever and would not come out of that horrible place! Upon reaching the bottom of the pit, I became conscious of some kind of spirit being by my side. I had not looked at him, because I could not take my gaze off of the fires of hell. But when I paused, the creature laid his hand on my arm to escort me in."³

Finally, the ascent out of hell is described:

"At that same moment, a voice spoke from far above the blackness, above the earth, and above the heavens. I don't know if it was the voice of God, Jesus, an angel, or who. I did not see him, and I do not know what he said, because he did not speak English; he spoke in some other tongue. When he spoke, his words reverberated throughout the region of the damned, shaking it like a leaf in the

wind, and causing the creature to take his hand off my arm. I did not turn around, but an unseen power, like a suction, pulled me up, away from the fire, away from the heat, and back into the shadows of the absorbing darkness. I began to ascend until I came to the top of the pit and saw the lights of earth. I saw my grandparents' home, went through the wall back into my bedroom, and it was just as real to me as it was any time I had entered through the door (my spirit needed no door). I slipped back into my body as easily as a man slips into his trousers in the morning. It was the same in which I had gone out-through my mouth. I began to talk to my grandmother. She said, "Son, I thought you were dead."⁴

Hagin experienced two more, similar, trips to hell and back that same evening. It was after the third visitation that he committed his life to Christ; the date was April 22, 1933.

Hagin had another profound experience during these bedridden months. This was a two-part revelation of the meaning of Mark 11.24 which reads: "I tell you, then, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours". It was on New Year's Day, 1934, that Hagin got his first insight into the meaning of this verse:

"Finally, I saw what I had been doing wrong: I wasn't really believing what God's Word said. I was saying it in my mind, but I wasn't believing it with my heart or acting upon it with my heart. I realized that for months I had been hoping I would grow better gradually. I was praying with hope, not faith, and that won't get the job done."⁵

By August of that same year, Hagin's physical condition remained unchanged and he continued to wrestle with the promise of Mark 11.23-24. During a conversational prayer, Hagin told God that he had been believing. A voice on the inside of him spoke back:

"Yes, you are believing as far as you know, but the last clause of that verse says, 'and you shall have them.'...In this moment, I saw exactly what that verse in Mark 11.24 meant. Until then I was going to wait till I was actually healed. I was looking at my body and testing my heartbeat to see if I had been healed. But I saw that the verse says that you have to believe when you pray. The having comes after the believing. I had been reversing it. I was trying to have first and then believe second. That is what most people do."⁶

As a result of this insight, Hagin began to praise God for his healing, although his symptoms had not disappeared. Then the Holy Spirit spoke to Hagin saying, "You believe that you are healed. If you are healed, then you should up and out of that bed".⁷ Ignoring Satan's jabs and his own visibly toneless limbs, Hagin determined to take a step. Within several days, he was able to dress and join his family for breakfast. A doctor, some time later, told him he no longer had any type of heart condition. Hagin notes that he has enjoyed almost perfect health since this time.

Hagin has had a variety of ministerial opportunities. As a Baptist evangelist with no formal theological training, Hagin took his first pastorate in 1934 at a community church in Roland, Texas. It was Hagin's belief in the power of divine healing that naturally led him to

identify and associate with the Full Gospel denomination. By 1937, Hagin had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, spoken in tongues and was licensed as an Assemblies of God minister; his days as a Baptist had ended. Over the next twelve years Hagin pastored Assemblies of God churches. Feeling called to do more evangelism, Hagin left the pastorate, and from 1949-1962 worked as an itinerant evangelist, still under the Assemblies of God. As we recall, this was "the decade" of healing evangelists, so Hagin had numerous comrades-in-ministry. In 1962-1963 Hagin gave up his papers with the Assemblies of God and began an independent ministry. The ministry first involved the distribution of books and tapes from an office in his home in Garland, Texas; three years later he moved the growing ministry to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Hagin's following has steadily increased up through the 1980s.

Absolutely vital to an understanding of Kenneth Hagin's theology is his emphasis on a person "having the anointing".⁸ It was only after his anointing as a teacher in 1943, and as a prophet in 1952, that Hagin felt he would experience ministerial success. In fact, Hagin has expressed regret over the years he spent pastoring without the anointing.⁹ Along with his anointings to teach and prophesy, Hagin believes that Jesus has also given him "special anointings" (or spiritual gifts) to heal the sick and to discern evil spirits. There are many reported testimonies to confirm these gifts as operative in Hagin's life.

An exceptional aspect of the life, and subsequent theology, of Hagin is his eight visions of Jesus. Occurring between 1950-1963, these "open visions" of Jesus contained a variety of information as well as anointings. Accounts of these visions are included in several of his books: *I Believe in Visions, The Ministry of the Prophet, and How You Can Be Led By the Spirit of God*. The tenor of familiarity, the detail, and the length of the visions are remarkable. A selection from his third vision in December 1952 serves as an illustration:

"On this night in 1952 in the parsonage kitchen, my physical senses were suspended. At that moment I didn't know I was kneeling beside a kitchen chair. It seemed as if I was kneeling in a white cloud that enveloped me. Immediately I saw Jesus. He seemed to be standing above me, about as high as the ceiling is from the floor. He began to talk to me. "I am going to teach you concerning the devil, demons, and demon possession," He began..."This really disrupts my theology, Lord. Would you explain some more?" I asked. (Sometimes we need our theology disrupted if it is not in line with the Word.) Jesus reminded me of the following Scripture..."But Lord, You can do anything. To say You couldn't is different from anything I've ever heard preached or preached myself. That really upends my theology." "Sometimes your theology needs upending," the Lord answered. I said, "Lord, even though I am seeing You with my own eyes, even though I hear your voice speaking to me as plainly as any voice I have ever heard, I cannot accept that unless You prove it to me by the Word of God. For the Word says...I will not accept any vision, I will not accept any revelation, if it cannot be proved by the Bible." Instead of becoming angry with me for saying this, Jesus smiled sweetly and said, "I will give you not just two or three witnesses; I will give you four witnesses..."¹⁰

These visions sometimes contain prophetic warnings for nations:

"The scroll was written in the first person, and seemed as if Jesus Himself were speaking. I read, "America is receiving her last call. Some nations already have received their last call and never will receive another." Then, in larger print it said, "THE TIME OF THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND." This statement was repeated four or five times. Jesus also said this was the last revival..."¹¹

and for individuals:

"The Lord said to me, "If I give you a message for an individual, a church, or a pastor, and they don't accept it, you will not be responsible. They will be responsible. There will be ministers who won't accept it and who will fall dead in the pulpit." I say this with reluctance, but this actually happened in one place where I preached. Two weeks from the day I closed the meeting, the pastor fell dead in the pulpit. When I left that church, I left crying. I told the pastor in the next church where I went to hold a meeting, "That man will fall dead in the pulpit." And just a short time later he did. Why? Because he didn't accept the message God's Spirit gave me to give him."¹²

Hagin also relays encouraging prophecies or "Words of the Lord":

"I had been interceding for my sister before the Lord appeared to me. He said, 'Your sister will live and not die. There is no danger of immediate death.' He said that she would live at least another five years, and she did. (When she died after five years exactly, she did not die from the condition that existed at that time; her death was caused by something else)."¹³

As instructed by Jesus, Hagin says he exercises his anointing as a prophet first and his anointing as a teacher second.¹⁴ The two roles are complimentary and key in Hagin's approach to ministry. After having the visions, Hagin teaches their instructional content to his students and congregation; many of the distinctive aspects of Hagin's message are contained within these visions. We will examine these distinctive points shortly.

One final observation of Kenneth Hagin, the man, is that he is widely considered to be the "Father of the Faith Movement". One does not have to travel to Broken Arrow, Oklahoma to hear Rhema theology. His teachings have been imbibed and successfully transmitted by other large faith churches and ministries in the United States including the televangelists Kenneth and Gloria Copeland of Fort Worth, Texas, and Frederick K.C. Price who has a 15,000 member congregation in Los Angeles. These ministers, as well as many others, publicly acknowledge the influence Hagin has had upon their message. There are also thriving Rhema-inspired churches around the world. The largest is probably the Rhema church near Johannesburg with over 10,000 members. Hagin, then, has preached a message which has succeeded in becoming a movement; it is to that gospel message that we now direct our attention.

Rhema-The Message

In general, Kenneth Hagin's message is a blend of traditional pentecostalism and his own teachings. Since we have an introductory knowledge of classical pentecostal theology, we will focus on the distinctive elements of Hagin's message. Knowing that Hagin was once an Assemblies of God minister, we expect his emphasis that Christians should exercise the full range of spiritual gifts. In fact, Hagin states, "the Church in these last days...will do greater things than even the Early Church did."¹⁵ Illustrative of this claim of "greater things" are the reports of resurrections through Hagin's ministry.

Another characteristically pentecostal teaching highlighted in Hagin's message is that a person must "have the anointing". In the Rhema Bible Training Center prospectus we read that "the most important aspect of Rhema is the anointing found here. The anointing on the Word, on the faculty, and in the classroom setting proves it to be a powerful and consistent factor in the overall spiritual development of our students."¹⁶ Having the anointing is referred to consistently throughout the prospectus; it appears to be a key theological phrase for those associated with Rhema.

The distinctive doctrine of the Rhema message is "positive confession theology". Positive confession theology "refers quite literally to bringing into existence what we state with our mouth, since faith is a confession".¹⁷ Hagin points to Romans 10:8 as the theological cornerstone of the doctrine: "'The word is near you: it is upon your lips and in your heart.' This means the word of faith which we proclaim ." The Greek word for the word of faith which we proclaim is "rhema"; literally it translates "the spoken word". In its classical usage, "rhema" had to do with stating something specifically. It is "the major premise of Rhema doctrine that whatever is spoken by faith becomes immediately inspired and, therefore, dynamic in the particular situation or event to which it is addressed"¹⁸ In other words, there is power in the act of speaking or requesting, if this is done in faith.

Hagin teaches, further, that "negative confession", that is speaking words that reflect unbelief, keeps Christians from success. In his book *Right and Wrong Thinking*, Hagin states:

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession [confession] Hebrews 4.14. It is easy to say, 'I believe this. Yes, this is in my heart', and make a positive confession. However, the first thing we know, we are saying something contrary-something negative-with our mouths. We must be careful to have the word of faith in our mouths instead...When people confess their lack, they build a sense of lack and inadequacy into themselves, and then these deficiencies gain the ascendancy in their lives. But Jesus is our Lord, and if we hold fast to the confession of His Lordship, then Jesus will gain the ascendancy in our lives and lead us into success. *We shall never rise above our confessions!* The confessions of a believer's lips that have grown out of faith in his heart will absolutely beat the devil in every combat. However, if a believer does not believe in his heart the confessions his lips are making, these confessions will not work.

And if he confesses Satan's ability to hinder him and to keep him from success, Satan will gain dominion over him. But Colossians 2.15 says, 'And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.' If Christ defeated the devil for us, then why does the devil do so many things against us? Why does he dominate people? Because people allow him to!"¹⁹

We see, then, the importance which Hagin places on the spoken word. These words do not only have to be positive words confessing spiritual truths; they also cannot be negative words confessing doubt. In Hagin's theology, confessing the right words with the right attitude is the sure combination for victory in every realm of the Christian life.

Rhema's theology is, arguably, the prototype of "positive confession theology". Although many of the tenets of positive confession theology are drawn, at times directly, from the writings of E. W. Kenyon (1867-1948), it is Hagin who has formulated the working positive confession theology. E. W. Kenyon was a New England minister and writer whose ideas were heavily tinged with the philosophy of Phineas P. Quimby (1806-1866). Generally, Kenyon's ideas were considered unorthodox and were never successfully integrated into the mainstream of American Christian thought. It has only been since Hagin's selective use and interpretation of his writing that Kenyon's name has reappeared. It is thus the "more Christian" Hagin, rather than Kenyon, who has formulated the widely accepted and imitated prototype of positive confession theology.

One of the most popular teachings that has emanated from positive confession theology is that one can, with the proper steps, receive what one wants from God. In his book, *How To Write Your Own Ticket With God*, Hagin shares the instructions which Jesus gave him in a vision:

"...If anybody, anywhere, will take these four steps or put these four principles into operation, he will always receive whatever he wants from Me or from God the Father...1. Say it. 2. Do it. 3. Receive it. 4. Tell it...I need to explain here that these four steps He gave me can be put into operation immediately, and you can receive anything in the present tense, such as salvation, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, healing for your body, spiritual victory, or finances. Anything that the Bible promises you now, you can receive now by taking these four steps. However, some things, such as some financial needs and the manifestation of some healings, etc., may take time to develop. Then the four steps become principles that you must put into practice over a period of time...But, thank God, whether they are steps to be taken immediately, or principles to be practiced over time, you can have what you say."²⁰

It is easy to understand why such teaching would gain a large audience. A formula with which one always receives whatever one wants is very attractive. These steps can be used to gain perfect health and material wealth, which, in the Hagin message, are taught as God's will for the believer. Hagin's teaching on perfect health is especially clear :

"It is not the will of God that we be sick. In Bible days, it was not God's will for the children of Israel to be sick, and they were God's servants . Today, we are God's children . If it was not His will for even his servants to be sick, it could not be His will for His children to be sick! Sickness and disease are not of love. God is love...Sickness comes from the same source that sin comes from. It doesn't come from heaven. There isn't any up there. Jesus told the disciples to pray, in what we call the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven'. Is it God's will that there be sickness in heaven? Everyone knows that it is not. Therefore it cannot be His will on earth."²¹

The same belief is also taught by Rhema South Africa's Ray McCauley . He asserts:

"I believe that all sickness, disease and injury are initiated by the devil. Scripture clearly tells us that he is the thief, destroyer and killer (John 10.10). In absolute contrast, Jesus declares that He came to give us life and to give it to us more abundantly. Being sick with cancer is not a more abundant life! Millions of Christians around the world regularly pray what has become known as the Lord's Prayer. One of the lines is, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven'. Tell me, is there any sickness, death or pain in Heaven? Of course not. So how can it be God's will for people to suffer on earth? It is clearly not His will. God's mercy and love endures forever. He loves people. He is love."²²

The biblical texts cited to support these identical assertions are Deuteronomy 28.15-22, 27-29, 35, 58-61 and Galatians 3. 13, the latter which reads: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..." From these texts, Hagin interprets all sickness as being a curse of the law. Poverty, too, is viewed as a part of the "curse of the law" and Hagin teaches that Christians can expect not only relief from poverty but the finest of everything:

"He [God] wants His children to eat the best, He wants them to wear the best clothing, He wants them to drive the best cars, and He wants them to have the best of everything..."²³

This "health and wealth" hermeneutic is the hallmark of the Faith Movement. Although it has been challenged, and even attacked, by other Christians, the prosperity gospel is popular. Laced with hope, and sanctifying self-interest, it sells well. It is, Hagin believes, a viable interpretation of the Scriptures which people want to hear. These themes, therefore, are prominent in the Hagin message.

The use of the concepts "revelation knowledge" and "sense knowledge" is another distinctive aspect of Hagin's message. These terms were first used by Kenyon in his book *The Two Kinds of Knowledge* (1942), and they constitute a crucial tenet of Kenyon's theology. Simply stated, "sense knowledge" is horizontal knowledge which comes through the five senses; "revelation knowledge" is vertical, supra-sensory, and comes from above. Hagin has taken these two Kenyon concepts and woven them into Rhema doctrine. Hagin teaches that the Bible is the source of revelation knowledge, although it appears that the

content of his eight supernatural visions also fall under the definition of revelation knowledge because their content is taught on a par with Scripture.²⁴

In practice, another element of the Hagin hermeneutic emerges in his emphasis on revelation knowledge. Claiming "revelation knowledge" one can receive a new interpretation of a particular verse or section of scripture.²⁵ Revelation knowledge, then, can be seen as a potential and continual source for a distinctive gospel message. In practice, it appears that insights gained via revelation knowledge can supercede the systematic principles of biblical interpretation. The result is that revelation knowledge shapes the Rhema hermeneutic.

The concept of revelation knowledge, alongside the doctrine of prosperity, has been criticized by other Christians as being untenable. Even in more sympathetic pentecostal and charismatic circles, criticisms of subsuming biblical authority and proof-texting have been leveled against Hagin's hermeneutic involving revelation knowledge.²⁶

We can sum up Hagin's message as a positive personal pentecostal presentation of the Christian gospel. The Hagin gospel emphasizes the promises of personal gain, whether they be spiritual, material or bodily. His clear reliance on the teachings of E. W. Kenyon is the main source for the distinctive tenor in his teachings and yet, it is this Kenyon connection which casts the greatest shadow across Hagin's orthodoxy.

Rhema-Its Influence

We now turn to consider Kenneth Hagin's medium, audience, and influence. What are the general channels of his message? To whom is it directed and who responds? How effective does it appear to be? The following observations on Rhema may also apply generally to the other ministries within the Faith Movement.

Typical of large American churches, Kenneth Hagin's ministry utilizes many forms of the media including television, radio, cassettes and videos, literature, a correspondence school, and a training centre. His radio message, Faith Seminar of the Air, is broadcast on over 200 stations in the USA and can be heard in 80 other countries. Over 40 million copies of the 130 Hagin and Hagin Jr. faith books have been distributed world-wide as well as 2.5 million teaching tapes. The Rhema monthly, *The Word of Faith*, has a circulation of 268,000.

A more accurate indicator of the interest in Rhema is the numbers associated with the Rhema church and educational ministries. The Rhema Correspondence Bible School was formed in the early 1970s to provide home Bible study plans; since its beginnings, the school has enrolled more than 23,000 students. The Bible Training Center was founded in 1974 and has graduated over 10,000 students since that year. It offers one and two year diplomas

to students preparing for faith ministries. The Rhema Bible Church, now pastored by Kenneth Hagin Jr., began full services as a church in 1985. Present membership is about 3,200 and appears to be growing steadily; a 6,000 seat church auditorium was completed in 1989.

A number of specialized ministries complete the ministerial picture in Broken Arrow. These include: a crusade ministry, the annual camp-meeting, a prison literature ministry, and a healing school. The healing school, which commenced in 1979, offers free daily classes featuring Hagin teaching and ministerial videos. The morning session is limited to those in need of physical healing, while the afternoon session is open to anyone. These sessions appear to be an especially practical way in which to introduce the Rhema doctrine of healing.

Rhema has two other international facilities, one in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the other in Perth, Australia. In both locations a church and a training centre function. The Johannesburg church has a Sunday morning attendance of approximately 10,000, making it Rhema's largest single congregation. As well, there is a Rhema office in Ontario, Canada.

It appears that socio-economic class more than skin colour affects the Rhema constituency around the world. Rhema affiliates of any colour and in any country are most likely to be drawn from the middle classes. Although the majority of the audience is white, there is a substantial non-white minority.²⁷

The influence of Kenneth Hagin has been intimated in the preceding paragraphs. He has set up a ministry network which formally circulates his message around the world. From his independent start in 1963, Hagin has continued into the 1990s to perpetuate a popular message of prosperity. Significant in spreading the Rhema gospel to Southern Africa is native Ray McCauley, considered from the inside to be Rhema's star graduate. As well, American preachers Kenneth Copeland and Frederick K. C. Price acknowledge the influence that Hagin's teachings have had in the formation of their ministries.

To conclude, we highlight, again, the seminal role of Kenneth Hagin in the Faith Movement. Hagin is honoured as an esteemed prophet by his constituency. This reputation has been perpetuated globally through the mass distribution of Hagin's literature. Through his disciples and Rhema graduates, we are likely to hear more of Kenneth Hagin and the Faith Movement in the future.

The Deeper Life Bible Church

We begin our examination of Deeper Life by taking a brief look at modern Nigeria. The present state of Nigeria dates from 1 October 1960, the day its independence was gained

from Britain. Nigeria was under the colonial sway of Britain from 1900; the capital city of Lagos was annexed even earlier, in 1861. Due to a series of coups and a unilateral declaration of independence by the "Republic of Biafra" (which prompted a brutal civil war) it took until 1970 for Nigeria to achieve a semblance of political stability. The present Federal Republic of Nigeria has twenty one states. The challenges of the present administration include managing the largest population on the African continent-over 100 million people-who speak over 500 languages.

Religion is an integral part of Nigerian life. The country is characterized by an Islamised and less-westernized north and a Christianised and more-westernized south; the two faiths each claim approximately 40-45% of the country's population. The remaining 10% consists of adherents of traditional religions, "new" religions such as Jehovah's Witnesses, and a sprinkling of atheists. Folk Islam and folk Christianity, a result of mixing African traditional religious beliefs with these faiths, appears common.

Both Islam and Christianity have a long and deliberate history in Nigeria. Muslims began penetrating the country as early as the eleventh century and by the fifteenth century dominated much of the state of Kano. The Portuguese who arrived in the sixteenth century introduced Christianity to Nigeria. Substantial Christian influence came four centuries later with the arrival of Anglican and British Wesleyan Methodist missionaries in the 1840s; Rome sent its second mission in 1868. The Assemblies of God had arrived by 1939.

The deliberate nature of Nigerian Islam and Christianity can be seen in the vigorous evangelisation by both faiths; competition for converts remains keen to the present day. Christian missionaries have targeted the largely rural north while Muslims have targeted the largely urbanized south. One more secular reason for this missionary activity is the question of whether or not Islamic Sharia law will be adopted into the country's 1992 constitution. It appears likely that the more converts each side can claim, the better its case before the government in 1992.

Nigeria has a wide variety of Christian denominations, including many indigenous and independent churches. The largest single church is the Roman Catholic, which claims about 12% of the country's population; another large church is the Anglican communion which claims over eight million members.²⁸ In the 1890s, at about the same time as the Ethiopian type independent churches of South Africa were appearing in South Africa, similar developments were occurring in Nigeria.²⁹ In Lagos, the Native Baptist Church seceded from the American Baptists in 1888 and the United Native African Church seceded from the Anglicans in 1891. These independent churches were the first of many in Nigeria, proposed by Africans who resented the heaviness of the European hand in their ecclesiastical affairs.

Independent Christian churches, meaning those churches which did not form in reaction to a parent denomination, have appeared with increasing frequency since the turn of the century. The Deeper Life Christian Church fits this definition. We turn to survey the life of William Kumuyi, founder of this independent church.

William F. Kumuyi-The Man

William Folorunso Kumuyi was born on 6 June 1941 in the village of Orunwa, Ijebu division, Western Nigeria. His parents were Anglicans and the young Kumuyi attended the Anglican church in Orunwa. "It was a very strict Christian home. . . We would get up in the morning, read the Bible, sing hymns, and go to church regularly."³⁰ By 1962, Kumuyi completed his secondary education at the Mayflower School in Ikenne, Western Nigeria. The headmaster of the Mayflower School, Dr. Tai Solarin, was an atheist whose thematic teaching on the virtues of self-reliance appears to have coincided with Kumuyi's loss of interest in church.³¹ After graduation, Kumuyi taught at the primary level for a year before returning to the Mayflower School to gain a Higher School Certificate. Following this, Solarin sponsored him for a degree course at the University of Ibadan.

By 1967, Kumuyi had graduated from the University of Ibadan with a first class honours degree in mathematics. That same year he returned to the Mayflower School as a teacher, but left in 1971 to begin a postgraduate course in education at the University of Lagos. The Lagos university took Kumuyi on as a mathematics lecturer in its College of Education. It was here, in 1973, that Kumuyi started the Bible study which was to grow into the Deeper Christian Life Ministry. In 1983 Kumuyi took an early retirement in order to work full-time with ministry he had started.

Kumuyi's conversion came during his years as a student at the University of Ibadan. It is at an Apostolic Faith Church service in Ikenne, on 5 April 1964, that Kumuyi dates his conversion:

"I understood the Gospel message, and was born again on 5 April 1964. I read John Wesley, Charles Finney, Spurgeon, and a lot of other books. I got involved with the Scripture Union, and I grew."³²

One evidence of his conversion was the restitution Kumuyi made with the West African Examination Council. Kumuyi admitted to the Council that in past years he had impersonated other candidates in examinations; he was pardoned by the Council and has since used the pardon to witness to those students for whom he had written the examinations.³³

Since his conversion and before committing himself fully to the ministry of Deeper Life, Kumuyi's Christian involvement centred around the activities of an interdenominational

student fellowship called Christian Union and its school equivalent, Scripture Union. During his student years in Ibadan, Kumuyi was active in the Apostolic Faith Church and affiliated loosely with Christian Union. In 1968, back at the Mayflower School, Kumuyi became the patron of the school's Scripture Union group. In his first years at the University of Lagos, Kumuyi was a patron and staff adviser of the Lagos Varsity Christian Union. Consciously and unconsciously, these groups certainly influenced Kumuyi's future, independent ministry.

Since few details are known about Kumuyi's early family and religious life at least one researcher, Matthews A. Ojo, feels that secrecy surrounds the man.³⁴ Kumuyi himself, in his book, *Holiness Made Easy*, writes: "if people knew all God knows about you, you will run away. I am so grateful that nobody knows anything about me."³⁵ The impact of his Anglican upbringing and his later affiliation with one of the Aladura churches is not readily known. Ojo also sees secrecy surrounding Kumuyi's parting with the Apostolic Church in 1977. However, another researcher, Alan Isaacson, appears to have extracted a substantial amount of information on this parting, a separation which appears to have developed over several years for both doctrinal and personal reasons.³⁶

Let us now return to Kumuyi's university Bible study of 1973 and see how this grew into the Deeper Life Church. It was only a matter of months before Kumuyi's university flat was too small for the Bible study group. By 1975, the group numbering 500 had moved to the front of the block of flats, where Kumuyi taught over a loudspeaker. The constituency grew to include people beyond the university setting, drawing students from the Yaba College of Technology as well as residents of Lagos. It was not long before the group was using the facilities of a church near the campus. One result of the enlarged Bible study was the formation of a Thursday evening Evangelism Training group.

It was the series of free retreats which dramatically raised the public profile of Deeper Life.³⁷ The first retreat was held in December 1975 and the advertising posted across Lagos promised free food and accommodation for all who attended. 1500 people attended. The Spring 1976 retreat attracted a group of 2500. By 1980, Deeper Life retreats had been held in most Nigerian states, including the Muslim north. The final retreat in 1981 drew 45,000 participants. It was from these retreats that the regional Bible studies drew their original numbers.

By 1979, Kumuyi had made plans to start Deeper Life Bible studies on every Nigerian university campus. To this end, in March 1979, a free Deeper Life retreat was offered to any interested Nigerian university student. It was from the address list compiled at this retreat that the Deeper Life Campus Fellowships were formed at many Nigerian universities. In 1980, the group's autonomy and exclusivity as a campus fellowship raised a furore from groups like the

Christian Union and Student Christian Movement, neither of whom emphasize the pentecostal elements of Christianity.³⁸

In 1982, Deeper Life became a church. Until this year Deeper Life's primary tasks were of a parachurch nature, forming Bible studies and training students in evangelism. However, increasing ecclesiastical pressure put on those involved in Deeper Life activities challenged them to choose an allegiance to either Deeper Life or their own church. This situation affected Kumuyi's decision in 1982 to incorporate the Deeper Life Bible Church. In addition to the obvious addition of Sunday services, Deeper Life hired its first full-time workers. The following year, 1983, Sunday morning services were supplemented with the Deeper Life House Caring Fellowships. The Caring Fellowships meet on Sunday afternoons in the place of an evening service and are designed to provide an opportunity for the individualized care of Deeper Life members. By 1988, attendance at the five Sunday morning services in Lagos was over 50,000 and 5,000 House Caring Fellowships had been formed.³⁹ The extensive ministry beyond Lagos and Nigeria will be discussed in a later section.

Kumuyi is the man behind the infrastructure of Deeper Life. In just a decade he has seen a university flat Bible study mushroom into a large and influential church. Kumuyi points to the Spirit of God as the power behind Deeper Life. It is to the message he preaches that we now direct our attention.

Deeper Life-The Message

Apostolic Faith pentecostalism, with a Wesleyan-influenced notion of sanctification, best describes the doctrine preached by W. F. Kumuyi. The pentecostal elements in his teaching are not surprising when we remember that Kumuyi's conversion and subsequent Christian growth was in the context of the Apostolic Faith Church. Kumuyi's teaching reflects the Apostolic Faith doctrine on the baptism of the Holy Spirit; the emphasis on the accompanying glossolalia is underplayed:

"...Now we turn to Luke 3.16 to see Spirit baptism as another essential of Christian growth...if you are saved and sanctified-filled and overflowing with sacrificial love and desiring to serve without pay, praise or recognition, the Lord will baptize you in the Holy Ghost. That baptism gives you power to serve the people you already love."⁴⁰

Kumuyi defines sanctification as:

"...the enthronement of the supreme love for God and man in the heart of the believer. This is made possible by the removal of the adamic nature-selfishness, bitterness, pride, anger, greed, self-centredness-in the heart of man. Simply put, the adamic nature is anything that is contrary to the will, heart and mind of Christ. While this is removed, the pure love of God and men supremely reigns in the heart. It then becomes very easy to forgive, live and fellowship with everybody.

Anger, bitterness, jealousy and other forms of filthiness of the spirit disappear. When this happens, everybody around you will know..."⁴¹

Although Kumuyi teaches that as one grows in faith one sins less, he does not advocate a doctrine of "sinless perfection".⁴² From the aforementioned references we can see the importance that Kumuyi places on a distinctive Christian lifestyle; in sum, the Christian should be recognizable because of his or her outstanding integrity and modest living.

Bible study, as well as evangelism, remains one of the first priorities of Deeper Life. The church places a great emphasis on knowing the content of the Scriptures:

"...saturation in the scripture is essential in Christian growth. You need to read the Bible in the morning before you go into the day's activities. You should also read it before you go to bed at night. You should saturate your heart, mind and head with the Word of God."⁴³

During Kumuyi's hour-long expository sermons, heavily marked copies of the King James Version are prominent.⁴⁴ There is a memory verse on the Sunday song sheet, and the daily Bible readings and individual study guides are co-ordinated with the Sunday sermon.⁴⁵ Those members really committed to spiritual growth will attend the Monday night Bible study, now held in three sessions at the church.

Since the late 1970s, physical and spiritual healing have become more integral elements of the Deeper Life gospel.⁴⁶ The exorcism of demons, breaking witch's spells, anointing handkerchiefs to heal, the restoration of sight, and the growth of stunted limbs, are all considered "normal" in the ministry of Deeper Life.⁴⁷ Unlike Kenneth Hagin, who speaks of his special anointing as a prophet and healer, Kumuyi does not speak of a particular calling. Rather, he has seen his gift as a healer develop over time:

"Since I became born again, I have known that Jesus can heal. I know that God has the power to do all things. I also believe that if someone is sick, he or she can pray and be healed by God. But most of the healings that we witnessed at that time were gradual. You pray, and others pray for you, and eventually you are healed. I started studying the Bible. In October 1982 I attended a conference in Caister, in the UK. I saw others minister to the sick, and it was a little bit new to me. So as a result of my reading and praying, in February 1983, I mentioned someone's problem while praying in church. The Lord revealed it to me, I prayed, and the person was delivered, and came to give her testimony. The incident encouraged me to know that the gift was there but I needed to develop it. So eventually we started seeing some of these things in a little measure, and it has been growing since then!"⁴⁸

Kumuyi appears to teach an Africanised version of Hagin's prosperity gospel. Foundationally, Kumuyi teaches that it is God's perfect will that a Christian realise perfect health and material benefits:

"It is God's perfect will that a believer should enjoy perfect health, spiritual and material blessings, victory, promotion, peace, joy and satisfaction throughout his sojourn on earth. There are thousands of promises in the word of God that should make a believer remain blessed all the days of his life. "49

Sin in the believer's life, however, not only blocks blessings and miracles, but is also linked with curses, which can be inflicted by an enemy:

"The Bible tells us that a curse cannot be inflicted on a family or an individual without a cause. Whatever way we see it, calamity, disease, sickness, problems and misery are offshoots of a curse." 50

To remain in the state of blessedness the Christian must stay faithful to God:

"You can be blessed everyday of your life and you can ride on the crest of victory throughout your pilgrimage on earth. But everything depends on you. If you invite a curse it will come. How? By disobeying the Lord...(Deuteronomy 28.20)...If you fail to hearken to the word of God a curse will come upon you. If you commit sin, you are building a bridge on which the devil will walk to inflict a curse upon you. That is why it is important for the believer to remain in the word of God."51

Finally, to eradicate a curse Kumuyi sets out five steps:

"...how can a curse be revoked or cancelled? One, through repentance and faith in Christ. The Bible says, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us all: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.' (Galatians 3.13)...If you will confess your sins to God, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be translated from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ...You will need to renounce all contacts with the occult or secret societies. Get rid of all contacts, objects, or articles that link you with the occult. Renounce the devil and receive Christ; and, then, the curse will be cancelled. Two, forgive all your enemies and all the people you think are associated with the curse...(Mark 11.25)...Three, a prayer of authority must be offered for you in order to break the yoke. (Matthew 18.18)...If you are under any curse, get a believer to pray the prayer of authority for you...Then, God's blessings will flow into your life. Four, obey the word of God...(Deuteronomy 28.1-2). Obedience brings blessing. Five, you must maintain positive confession at all times. 'For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.' (Colossians 3.3). Maintain that positive confession after you have been prayed for. Confess what the Bible says about you. Remember, if anybody tries to curse you the Lord will change the curse into a blessing..."52

We see that Kumuyi has integrated into his theology solutions to the African continental belief in curses. In Christ, the power of curses can be overcome once, and for all time. The conditions of the freedom from curses are inextricably linked to a repentant and faithful Christian life. Like Hagin, Kumuyi stresses the importance of the "speaking the word of faith" or positive confession in maintaining a state of a perpetual blessedness.

Unlike Hagin, however, who appears to insist on and even demand the miraculous by combining enough faith and the right words, Kumuyi appears only to expect the miraculous.

In fact, Kumuyi believes that there are even special miracles for those Christians with weak faith:

"There is a special miracle for the weak believers. A great blessing awaits the 'little faith' believer. Those who are weak in faith, weak in understanding and weak in prayer have many special miracles with their names attached to them. Many years ago, I tenaciously held the opinion that if a believer's faith is weak Jesus cannot heal him. But the Lord jerked me into the realities of His miracle working power recently...Therefore, the Lord began to show me how He wrought special miracles for weak believers in Bible times. I went through all that He showed me. It was great...I emerged a different person, saturated with the love and mercy of God for weak believers-even sinners..."⁵³

While it takes "the faith of the man of God" to effect healing for those of little faith, those of great faith can effect their own miracle. Kumuyi writes:

"I will like you to know how the miracle word can come into your own mouth, so that when you speak the word of miracle in prayer, signs and wonders will follow you...Note what Jesus said: 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth'...A gulf stands between you and the miracle word you desire to speak if sin still lingers in your heart. That is why you cannot speak the miracle word...Turn to God and repent of the evils you have committed. And henceforth, you will begin speaking miracle words..."⁵⁴

For Kumuyi, the miraculous is a normative aspect of the gospel. While weak faith and sin will hinder the miraculous, there seems to be little, if no, doubt that God can and wants to give people the miracles they desire. Deeper Life's Thursday Miracle Revival Hour is tangible evidence of this assertion. The church's emphases on healing and evangelism prompted the researcher Ojo to write:

"...looking at the organization from the outside, it could be said that both healing and preaching (evangelism) are regarded as sacraments. Their constant celebration are regarded as a reminder of Christ's saving power, and they further give a spirit of renewal to the recipients."⁵⁵

Another traditional feature of classic pentecostalism which characterizes Deeper Life doctrine is its legalism, although in recent years some of the regulations pertaining to personal conduct have been relaxed. In the beginning, Deeper Life members were taught that Christian women should not wear make-up or jewellery, that all Christians were to avoid high fashion, television, and certain non-alcoholic beverages like cola. Further, the most committed disciple of Christ would emulate St. Paul and remain single; this teaching was noticeably altered after Kumuyi married in 1980!⁵⁶ In a discussion with researcher Alan Isaacson, Kumuyi commented on the topic of legalism:

"When I became born again, the church of which I was a member emphasized all these things as part of one's Christian life. Then too, I read much of John Wesley in my early years of Christian life. I always knew that you are saved by grace through faith. But then that we are 'created unto good works' (Ephesians 2.10). That means, as an evidence that I'm born again I should show it by the lifestyle that

I lead. If my life does not conform with the Bible standard, and I am 'living in sin' (Romans 6.2), it is an evidence that I do not have what I profess...Then you have seen the lifestyle in Nigeria: the bribery, corruption, unpunctuality, falsifying accounts (when you get to a place of work at 8 a.m., you write that you got there at 7.30 a.m.). Now the only way for me to correct all these things was to say, 'If you are a Christian, indicate the exact time you get to the office. If you resume at seven thirty, put seven thirty. If you get there at nine, put nine. If you resume at nine and you put eight, you are lying, and a Christian should not lie. That way the lives of the people became changed. And so we were known as people who were legalistic. We would say that if you are a Christian, then you couldn't do this, you couldn't do that; if you were cheating your employers before, you will restore the money. We just counted that, and even now we still count that, as an evidence that you are born again....I think the interpretation of the other people is that we feel that you get yourself qualified to get into the Kingdom of God, but that's a misinterpretation of what we stand upon. It's the grace of God evidenced by the good life..."⁵⁷

These expectations of right moral behaviour reflect a very different type of legalism from the legalism Kumuyi preached earlier, which was more concerned with attire and consumption.

When asked by Isaacson what he felt was distinctive about Deeper Life, Kumuyi spoke of the ministry's literalistic hermeneutic:

"...we interpret the Bible literally wherever possible. We take the commandments and warnings as seriously as we take the promises. I would think that is the major characteristic that the country and other churches know us for, and what we also feel distinguishes us. We are not just taking a part of the Bible, and doing away with the commandments and warnings. The corollary to that is that we take Christian living, or 'holiness', seriously."⁵⁸

This contrasts markedly with Ojo's impression of what makes the Deeper Life Church distinctive. In his doctoral study on the church he states: "What makes Deeper Life unique is its expansionist policy using evangelism and healing as weapons."⁵⁹ We will explore this theme in Chapter Three.

A sense of being cared for is another, less heady, characteristic of Deeper Life. The Sunday House Caring Fellowships, small groups which are held in members' houses, are key to creating such an atmosphere. In his interviews with Deeper Life members all over Nigeria, Isaacson was told consistently that the personal caring was an exceptional aspect of the church.⁶⁰

In Kumuyi's preaching, there appears to be little social concern for those beyond the Deeper Life community. By his own admission, Kumuyi confesses that Deeper Life needs to put more emphasis on its outward social responsibility:

"Honestly, I would think that we need to address such a question more than we have ever done...What we should be doing is that we should co-operate with the community. For example, if we need to develop the road in our community here, we will do that together...I know from what I have been reading that we can do more. I wouldn't talk in terms of 'organizing the poor to seek justice'. I've never

thought it's right for the church to be confrontational to the government...As a church of this size we need to ask ourselves what we can do, intelligently and legitimately, to help solve a particular problem in society. I would say that is part of good works, as an expression of our faith in Christ...When it comes to sinking wells and building roads in rural areas, for example, that is something we should be thinking about, but honestly we have not been addressing those issues."⁶¹

The gospel message as preached by Kumuyi, then, seems to be a personal blend of pentecostal and Wesleyan doctrines combined with rather myopic social vision. The Bible is central; community development is peripheral. There is a pronounced emphasis on personal and inter-relational integrity. Let us now examine the influence of Kumuyi and Deeper Life.

Deeper Life-Its Influence

Kumuyi's Deeper Life is a large ministry which has spawned over 1,000 congregations. Although most of these congregations are in Nigeria, there are a growing number of Deeper Life congregations in other African countries as well as in the Philippines, the United States, and Britain. The church's membership is well over 200,000; of this total more than 50,000 belong to the central congregation in Lagos. We will look first at the spectrum of ministries in Nigeria and then mention Deeper Life's missionary ventures beyond Nigeria.

The central church in Gbagada, Lagos, seats 12,000 and, in 1988, five Sunday services were being held weekly. In 1983, in response to its largely economically poor constituency, the Thursday Evangelism Training evening was changed to a "Miracle Revival Hour". This was a deliberate and successful attempt to raise the expectation for healing miracles.⁶² The "original" Monday night Bible study continues to draw a huge crowd; weekly attendance averages 25,000 in three sessions. For youth, Deeper Life holds a children's version of its church service, Bible study, and Miracle Revival Hour.

All Deeper Life services are conducted in English, Nigeria's official language, with simultaneous translation into fifteen other languages. The style of worship is more western than African: there is vocal, communal prayer but little congregational movement, and certainly no dancing.⁶³ The westernized emphasis of Deeper Life worship may be attributed to Kumuyi's past association with western groups such as Christian Union and Scripture Union; it also may reflect a desire to avoid any charges of syncretism.

There are a number of Deeper Life ministries beyond the church premises. As well as the Sunday House Caring Fellowship groups, Deeper Life has created a parallel ministry called the International Friendship League (IFL). The IFL is geared towards the professional class and is designed to facilitate more intellectual Bible study. The group also holds social and evangelistic events which are more likely to draw professionals than would a regular

crusade.⁶⁴ From 1980-1983, a seminary organized by Kumuyi for independent Nigerian Christians, the International Bible Training Centre, offered classes. The school closed in February 1983 due to a lack of funds. The campus, near Lagos, is now used as a conference centre. That same year, 1983, another ministry venue, the Faith Maternity Home, opened its doors; its maternity services are free to Deeper Life members.

Literature is a vital link in the geographically extensive ministry of Deeper Life. Except for a four-volume Sunday School outline published in 1986, all the ministry's tracts and books have been written by Kumuyi himself; Kumuyi also publishes a Deeper Life Newsletter.⁶⁵ This assures the greatest chance for doctrinal uniformity, and Kumuyi sees this as an effective weapon against false doctrines.⁶⁶ Further, literature is an important element in Deeper Life's ministry to Nigeria's growing elite, its university graduates; the written message serves as a constant source of spiritual inspiration.⁶⁷

The international influence of Deeper Life continues to expand in the 1990s. The first foreign country to have a Deeper Life fellowship was Ghana in 1979. By 1983, the Nigerian ministry had established churches or had missionaries working in: Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.⁶⁸ Britain, in 1988, has been one of the most recent countries to be targeted by the evangelistic designs of Deeper Life. Deeper Life's evangelistic strategies will be discussed in Chapter Four.

The audience profile of Deeper Life appears to be predominantly black and materially poor. There is, however, a significant minority drawn from the professional class. A less obvious characteristic of Deeper Life church members is their prior commitment to another church tradition; Deeper Life draws much of its constituency from the traditional denominations: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Methodist.⁶⁹ Because of this fact, Deeper Life has been accused of "sheep-stealing" and, naturally, this has caused ecumenical strains.⁷⁰

Deeper Life's presence has been established in every Nigerian state. Its influence is being increasingly felt across the African continent. Deeper Life's active evangelism coupled with the spiritual openness which seems presently to characterise so much of Africa makes it appear likely that the church will continue to grow in the 1990s.

We conclude with the observation that, like Kenneth Hagin to Rhema, a knowledge of the person of William F. Kumuyi is crucial to a fuller understanding of the Deeper Life Bible Church. In both churches, the man has created the ministry. In both churches, the doctrines that are taught reflect, sometimes to a high degree, the life experiences of the man. In fact,

the historical precedent of Christian tradition and theology appear of secondary importance to the man's own interpretation. That this is the case is substantiated, in part, by the exclusivity of their publications.

Youth With A Mission

In mission circles, Youth With A Mission is known by its acronym, YWAM (pronounced "why wham"). In its Statement of Purpose, YWAM declares that it is:

"an international movement of Christians dedicated to presenting Jesus Christ personally to this generation, to mobilizing as many as possible to help in this task, and to the training and equipping of believers for their part in fulfilling the Great Commission."⁷¹

A two-fold Christian witness, sharing the gospel and ministries of mercy, is foundational to YWAM. In the words of YWAM's founder, the "twins of the good news are an ever-deeper love of God and an ever-deeper love for our neighbour."⁷²

Since its incorporation in 1961 YWAM has grown into an organization involving thousands. In 1989, YWAM sent out 17,300 short-term (between two weeks and twelve months) missionaries, half of whom were students. That same year, 1989, saw a core of 6,359 men and women working full-time with the organization. At the end of 1990 YWAM was working out of 400 established operating locations in 103 countries.⁷³ Considering the organization's size, it is quite interesting to note that there are no salaried people in YWAM; it is a "faith mission". Each person must raise his or her own financial support.

Loren Cunningham-The Man

The visionary leader behind YWAM is Loren Cunningham. Cunningham was born in 1935 in Taft, California. Both of his parents were ordained Assemblies of God ministers who felt their calling was to preach wherever God told them to go. The itinerant nature of their calling meant that the family moved frequently; in the early years they lived out of an old Chevrolet or in tents. Most of Cunningham's childhood was spent in small California towns.

The young Cunningham learned a set of principles concerning divine guidance through the teaching and example of his parents. At the age of six, Cunningham had his first experience in hearing God; it was after a Sunday evening service and he knew for the first time that "he belonged to God."⁷⁴ Cunningham was taught to expect God to direct him in even the smallest of everyday affairs. Cunningham relates the story of being sent to the store, at age nine, with a five dollar bill to buy milk. Along the way he lost the money and had to return home and tell his mother. Upon hearing the news, his mother knelt and prayed that

God would direct them to the lost bill, telling God that they really needed this money for groceries. Within a few moments she felt God telling her it was to be found under a bush. A short time later, while checking under bushes en route, the money was recovered.⁷⁵ These early lessons of expecting God's guidance have since been integrated into YWAM's theology.

At the age of thirteen, Cunningham felt "the call". He was at the altar rail in his uncle's church, after a revival sermon preached by his mother, when he felt supernaturally transported:

"Suddenly I felt as if I were not there but somewhere out in the heavens. Before my eyes, written in bold letters were the words, GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. The Great Commission of Mark 16.15! I opened my eyes but the words were still there. I closed them again and the burning words remained. There was no doubt in my mind that I was being called to preach. Maybe even to be a missionary, since the words before me said go into "all the world".⁷⁶

His mother let little time pass. The following week, as a "test" of his calling, the young Cunningham had his first opportunity to preach.

Stability and spiritual growth appear to characterize Cunningham's adolescence. In contrast to his childhood, Cunningham's teen years were geographically fixed. By 1948, the Cunninghams had moved to a new house in Los Angeles, where his father had taken up a pastoral position which was to last many years. Cunningham appears to have retained a sense of his "calling" throughout these years. In his final year of secondary school, Cunningham spent his Easter holidays on an evangelistic mission to Mexico. It was this trip to Mexico, where he saw people so readily "accept Christ as their Saviour and Lord", which encouraged Cunningham to enrol in the Assemblies of God Central Bible Institute in 1954.

It was during his student years at Central Bible Institute that Cunningham had the vision which led to the formation of YWAM. In June, 1956, while on tour with a gospel singing quartet in Nassau, Cunningham had this vision:

"That night after our singing engagement, I returned to the missionary's guest room...I lay down on the bed, doubled the pillow under my head and opened my Bible, routinely asking God to speak into my mind. What happened next was far from routine. Suddenly, I was looking at a map of the world. Only the map was alive, moving! I sat up. I shook my head, rubbed my eyes. It was a mental movie. I could see all the continents. Waves were crashing onto their shores. Each went onto a continent, then receded, then came up further until it covered the continent completely. I caught my breath. Then, as I watched, the scene changed. The waves became young people-kids my age and even younger-covering the continents. They were talking to people on street corners and outside bars. They were going from house to house. They were preaching. Everywhere they were caring for people ...Then the scene was gone. Wow! I thought. What was that? ...Had I imagined the vision or had God shown me the

future? Was that really you, Lord? I wondered, still staring at the wall, amazed.. Young people-kids, really-going out as missionaries! What an idea!...One thing was certain. I should tell no one about the vision. Not until I understood what it meant.⁷⁷

It took Cunningham several years to fully comprehend the vision. In the meantime, Cunningham had earned his bachelor's degree and moved back to California. He then earned a master's degree from the University of Southern California and was ordained with the Assemblies of God. At 24, he took a position with the denomination as the leader of youth activities in the Los Angeles area. It was from this position that Cunningham further ascertained the potential and enthusiasm of young people for missionary service:

"I enjoyed my work-the young people were all so bright and eager. But I had to admit that most of the activities I planned for them were empty. They missed the heart of the young people because they had no challenge. That's what we all long for, especially in our teens and early twenties. The big challenge. I remembered again that strange vision I had seen in the Bahamas...was it already four years ago? The contrast between that vision and my little efforts was cruel. It was time to do something."⁷⁸

That same year, 1960, Cunningham organized a student missionary trip to Hawaii and traveled around the world to "scout out the possibilities overseas".⁷⁹ By December 1960, Cunningham and a couple who shared his vision, Bob and Lorraine Theetge, had started the work of YWAM.

For the first several years, Cunningham operated his ministry under the aegis of the Assemblies of God foreign missions. The first YWAM team of two young men went to Liberia for a year to operate bulldozers and to share Christ. It was in 1964, after a team of 146 young people spent a summer witnessing on every island of the Bahamas, that Cunningham chose to part paths with the Assemblies of God.

At their meeting in Missouri, the denominational hierarchy and Cunningham could not concur on the form YWAM should take. Both YWAM's potential unwieldiness and its existing multi-denominational character posed technical problems for the Assemblies of God foreign mission program. The denomination suggested a scaled-down version and offered Cunningham the position as its director. It appears that Cunningham believed the Assemblies counter-proposal too anaemic, because he chose to give up his ministerial credentials and set out independently. It was part of Cunningham's vision to develop YWAM as an interdenominational mission organization.

The organization has grown steadily over the years, but there has been conspicuous growth since 1979, the year in which YWAM began to recruit workers for practical, mercy missions:

"...workers streamed to us. It was as if we had opened a door against which hundreds of young men and women had been pressed, waiting. More experienced people came too."⁸⁰

The present size and scope of the organization have fleshed out much of Cunningham's 1956 vision, that waves of young missionaries would take the gospel to every continent. We now look at some of the particular emphases of the gospel message as taught in YWAM circles.

YWAM-The Message

Both pentecostal and evangelical elements are found in YWAM's gospel message. In its Statement of Purpose we read that YWAM believes:

"...that the Holy Spirit's power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ's last commandment ..."⁸¹

This phrase concerning the work of the Holy Spirit appears sufficiently broad enough to allow a wide range of interpretations. An indication of its commitment to uphold evangelical doctrine is YWAM's signing of the Lausanne Covenant. By drawing from both evangelical and pentecostal doctrines, YWAM has been able to attract Christian workers from both traditions.

Of the several doctrinal emphases evident in YWAM literature, the doctrine of divine guidance is the most prominent. At the end of Cunningham's book on YWAM's history is a section entitled "Twelve Points to Remember: Hearing the Voice of God". He opens:

"If you know the Lord, you have already heard His voice-it is that inner leading that brought you to Him in the first place. Jesus always checked with His Father (John 8.26-29) and so should we; hearing the voice of the heavenly Father is a basic right of every child of God."⁸²

In his book *Discovering Your Destiny*, YWAM's Floyd McClung, Jr. details this theme:

"The Bible teaches that there are three different sources or 'voices' we can hear-the voice of God, the voice of Satan, and the voice of fleshly desires (or human desire that are good, but may not be God's best for us). The task for us is to recognise and know which voice is which. A voice that constantly tells us to avoid anything that places a demand on our lives, and urges us to take the easy way out of things is most likely the voice of the flesh. This voice encourages us to pamper ourselves and listen to the promises of God without taking note of the conditions associated with them. God has promised to give us the desires of our heart-yes-but when our hearts are wholly His, our desires are also in harmony with His...Most often, God speaks in the quietness of the heart to those He has the confidence will do what He asks. However, we should not put God in a box. He is free to guide us whenever, wherever, and however He chooses. And when He speaks He will not obscure things from us so that we have to puzzle over them for weeks trying to understand what it is He has said. When God speaks He is clear and specific. Do not get trapped into the practice of analysing every event and circumstance that happens in life to see if God is speaking. From time to time God will use circumstances as a way of guiding us; however, we will know when those

times are and will not have to go looking for them. God speaks through our own minds. He will plant thoughts and ideas in our minds as we prayerfully seek Him. It is often wise to analyse a decision carefully considering the pros and cons. This is a time to apply Biblical principles to the decisions we are making, and to use some sanctified common sense."⁸³

The fundamental assumption here is that God can and will guide Christians in everyday life. While the principle of divine guidance is unexceptional in religious circles, the spectrum and degree of YWAM's teaching on the subject is exceptional. It appears that guidance can be as small and insignificant as being directed to one's lost keys or it can be as large and important as being directed to one's vocation or marriage partner. Bible reading, prayer and meditation are some of the more usual practices through which YWAM teaches a Christian can expect guidance.

The guidance principles of Cunningham's colleague, lay Bible teacher Joy Dawson, are foundational in YWAM teachings. Dawson's "Three Steps to Hearing God" is particularly popular in YWAM circles; her three steps are:

"one, taking Christ's authority to silence the enemy; two, asking the Lord to clear from our minds any presumptions and preconceived ideas; and three, waiting, believing that God would speak in the way and in the time which He chose."⁸⁴

Dawson also taught Cunningham a guidance practice to which he now refers as the Wise Men Principle:

"Just as the three wise men individually followed the star and in doing so were all led to the same Christ, so God will often use two or more spiritually sensitive people to confirm what He is telling you. (2 Corinthians 13.1)."⁸⁵

The first demonstration of this principle convinced Cunningham of its efficacy:

"There were other surprises when I was invited to pray with the camp leaders. There were five of us, including the camp director and Jim and Joy Dawson. Four of us were to be speakers, including Joy, but today we were going to pray over the order of the speakers. What I expected was a time of general prayer then a discussion. Instead, one of the people explained to me as a first-timer that in this kind of practical guidance- prayer they would ask God to tell each person individually exactly the same thing. I tried to hide my astonishment...I leaned back in my folding chair but inside I was on the edge of my seat, waiting to see what would happen. Then that familiar voice inside my mind said a name-one of the four around me. "Well," said the camp director, "is everybody ready?" One by one each of us spoke out the name that had come into his mind. Each of us had heard the same thing! Five different people, yet each had the same answer...Day after day we found specific guidance in this same way. I was fascinated. The other four leaders had been praying together like this for years...The key...taught there, was yieldedness to Jesus. We weren't playing some kind of game...we were waiting, listening, focusing our minds on Jesus alone..."⁸⁶

Cunningham teaches that unconfessed sin is a major hindrance to guidance: "a clean heart is necessary if you want to hear God (Psalm 66.18)."⁸⁷ Confession also helps bring

about "breakthroughs", or significant strides, in ministry. This principle has been hewn from Cunningham's own experience; after times of self-examination and confession Cunningham has often seen growth in the ministry of YWAM.

As a faith mission, YWAM lives with the daily reality that God is "The Provider". From childhood, Cunningham had the opportunity to live by this principle, and apart from his years as a salaried minister with the Assemblies of God, he has continued to live with the expectation that God will provide the money for life's necessities. The ministry stories of both Cunningham and Floyd McClung, YWAM's Executive Director of International Operations, read as chronicles of God's provision for all types of expenses.⁸⁸ Cunningham's story of YWAM's first property purchase is a illustrates the point:

"A year earlier...God had spoken to us to buy the Hotel Golf. Up to that point all YWAM had owned was a few typewriters, a small used printing press...and a meager collection of used vans and cars. But God had said buy, so we declared it. I set my mind and spirit never to doubt that the necessary money would be there, and on time. Every week a little more arrived for the purchase of the Hotel Golf. We all did our part, too, the kids giving sacrificially with us for the purchase. Darlene and I believed God was saying we should sell our 'nest egg' house...and give that money. So we did. On the very last day the money was due, we were still lacking \$10,000. I went by the post office to check our mail one last time before going to give our payment. There, waiting in our box were donations from several people who believed in what we were doing. I found it very hard to believe-the total was \$10,060! Just out of curiosity, I watched the box for four days after we had paid the full amount, but nothing came in-not a dime."⁸⁹

With these types of "testimonies", YWAM seems to have inspired young people to believe that God will provide them with the financial support necessary for their ministry.

Although YWAM recruits are mostly single young adults, there is in YWAM's structure and teaching an underlying emphasis on the importance of the family. A family is seen as the ideal place in which to imbibe Christian principles:

"Not many of the kids we met had Darlene's and my advantage of growing up in families which were really miniature schools. In our homes we'd learned the ways of God, how He purifies, how He provides, how He guides. God, I now felt, wanted that same experience for all YWAMers, especially those who were to be full-timers; and He showed us this by giving a special leading of the Wise Men Principle. He wanted a family-like school and it was to be in Switzerland."⁹⁰

This emphasis can be seen in the living quarters of YWAM's Discipleship Training Schools and its university which are family-like in structure.

Not only is family life a structure and model for YWAM, families themselves are viewed as having a special capacity for ministry. Floyd McClung writes:

"The most important lesson that Sally and I have learnt by living in Amsterdam is one which we believe applies to all Christians, that God wants to use families to

reach others for Himself...While the adults found it hard going, our children provided a way into the situation. Children and animals can melt even the hardest of hearts, and we were surprised and delighted to see how God used Misha, Matthew, the youngsters of other YWAM families and our dog, Pooh, to open doors and lives. They were not simply there because we had been called and they had no choice but to come along. Rather, God had a very important role for them to play in the establishing of our...work."⁹¹

In teaching that family units have a calling and are an effective tool for sharing Christ, YWAM plants visionary seeds in the hearts of its single workers who later raise families of their own.

The YWAM message, then, is an evangelical and pentecostal gospel peppered with teachings taken from the backgrounds and experiences of its leadership team. Loren Cunningham and Floyd McClung, Jr's teachings appear to dominate, but not completely overshadow, the teachings put forth by YWAM's other leaders. The regional autonomy of the organization is one reason for Cunningham and McClung's measured influence.

YWAM-Its Influence

A "reticulated web" may best describe YWAM as an organization. Its international offices are in Kailua- Kona, Hawaii and Amsterdam. Loren Cunningham and the Pacific and Asia Christian University are based in Hawaii. Floyd McClung works out of Amsterdam. From here the mission is partitioned in several ways. Cunningham has sectioned the globe into four regions; there is one region containing the mission's two ships and three international regions which are divided and subdivided into areas, nations, and districts. Although each of the regions has its own council, YWAM authority is decentralized in over 300 autonomous locations world-wide. Each of these locations has its own separate funding and bylaws. Both the international council, which consists of a seven-man board, and the annual strategy conference knit together the organization.

How is the organization funded? It varies. If it is a pioneer ministry just settling into a new place, the team member or the team leader will usually support the ministry for a considerable time during the initial phase. In time, the ministry typically gains increasing financial support from local churches and individuals; support is solicited through both direct and indirect appeals and prayers.⁹²

YWAM provides several types of formal classroom education. The shortest course is a five-month curriculum offered by its 100 or so Discipleship Training Schools. Two to four year degrees are offered at its School of Urban Missions in Amsterdam, and also at the Pacific and Asia University in Hawaii.

Probably the most distinctive YWAM ministry is that of its two "mercy ships," the Good Samaritan and the Anastasis. As well as the classroom teaching which takes place on board, the ships provide disaster and relief supplies, as well as medical and engineering services.

In contrast to our first two case-studies, YWAM does not appear to give literature a prominent role in its ministry. There is comparatively little YWAM literature and the literature which does exist is targeted for a Christian readership. For example, the newsletter *World Christian News* published in Amsterdam seems to be a key YWAM periodical. The YWAM staff autobiographies read as both inspirational teaching material for young YWAMers and spiritual rejuvenation for those "seasoned in the faith." Other YWAM titles are clearly communicating mission theology and strategies.⁹³ It may be that YWAM's most effective literature campaign is its circulation of recruitment brochures!

Young people are the backbone of YWAM. No one seems more aware of this than Cunningham, whose original vision and theology of mission has prompted him through the years to recruit even greater numbers of youth. In 1984, Cunningham wrote:

We send out 15,000 workers a year but they are only a fraction of what's needed. If each of these workers reached 100 people that's only one and a half million out of the four billion on earth! The labourers are still few, very few. Only God is great enough to fulfil the vision of the waves and see every person on earth receive a personal message of His love for them."⁹⁴

The "internationalization" of YWAM personnel appears to be a current priority for the mission. That is, YWAM desires to have an increased percentage of non-western staff and students. The challenge seems to be taken seriously. In one year, from 1987-1988, the percentage of non-western full-time staff increased from about 23% to 31.9%.⁹⁵

YWAM views the world as its potential audience. Its evangelistic preaching teams attempt to work in any open country or situation. Its mercy missions are usually welcomed in any needy country or situation. The statistics of YWAM workers and of the spiritual responses to their ministry are a good indication that many in the world are listening.

In summary, we pose the question, does Cunningham relate to YWAM like Hagin relates to Rhema and Kumuyi relates to Deeper Life? No, he does not. It is a different relationship. Although Cunningham is certainly a spiritual inspiration and wields an influential hand in the general operations of YWAM, he has diversified his organization to a much greater degree which virtually guarantees a heterogeneity not found in either Rhema or Deeper Life. Again, literature provides us with a clue. Cunningham is not prolific; his several publications stand alongside the writings of many others within the organization.

Christ for All Nations

Reinhard Bonnke is an international healing evangelist. His crusade ministry, Christ for all Nations, is:

"an interdenominational evangelistic organization working with all Full Gospel churches and fellowships. The main thrust of the ministry is to carry the living Word of God to the millions of people in Africa."⁹⁶

The crowds drawn to his meetings over the past two decades have been some of the largest in the history of crusade evangelism; in March 1990 an estimated 250,000 turned out for a single service in Burkina Faso. The unlikely success of a German evangelist across Africa has been noted repeatedly by the press. Let us turn now to take a look at highlights in the life of Reinhard Bonnke.

Reinhard Bonnke-The Man

Reinhard Willi Gottfried Bonnke was born on 19 April 1940 in Königsberg, Germany. His father was a professional soldier and was on duty in 1945 when Mrs. Bonnke and her six children narrowly escaped the Russian advance on Königsberg. For the next several years Mrs. Bonnke and the children lived as refugees in Denmark; Mr. Bonnke was captured as a prisoner of war and put in a camp at Kiel. It was not until 1948 that the family was reunited.

Bonnke has a substantial spiritual heritage. Bonnke's father was dramatically converted as a young soldier after he was healed from tuberculosis; Mr. Bonnke later became a minister, associating with the Federation of Free Pentecostal Churches.⁹⁷ Bonnke also had a devout Christian grandmother and mother.

A series of spiritual experiences during childhood convinced Bonnke that he was to be "used by God" in a dramatic manner. His mother "led him to the Lord" at the age of nine, and soon thereafter he responded to an altar call in order to make his conversion public.⁹⁸ One biographical account of his childhood portrays Bonnke as a spiritually-minded boy; Jesus was his boyhood hero and he enjoyed preaching to trees:

"A friend and myself would go off where nobody could see us or hear us and we would preach out our hearts to the trees. I must confess that my friend was always much better at preaching than I was and I wondered whether I would ever become good enough to stand behind a pulpit."⁹⁹

Another intimation of Bonnke's spiritual future occurred when he was ten years old. During a midweek prayer meeting, a member of Bonnke's church had a vision in which she saw a little boy breaking bread before thousands of black people; the woman identified the little boy as the young Bonnke. Later, as a teenager, Bonnke sensed a small confirmation of

this vision when he had a dream in which he saw a large map of Africa with the name of one city- Johannesburg.

At the age of nineteen, Bonnke began a two-year course at the Bible College of Wales. During these two years Bonnke was exposed to a relatively new aspect of the Christian faith: believing in God as the provider for all things. The college staff lived "by faith" for their financial situations, and Bonnke was impressed enough by their example to want to try it for himself.

As Bonnke prayed about how to have this kind of faith, he felt God telling him, "if you really want to become a man of faith, give away all the money you have. Give it to a missionary who passes through here and then you will see what I will do."¹⁰⁰ At least two eleventh hour stories result from this "financial faith" experiment. Both incidents involved money needed and received for transportation and both were taken by Bonnke as concrete evidence that God would always provide for him.¹⁰¹

After his graduation from Bible College, Bonnke returned to Germany and gained experience in both crusade evangelism and church planting. He married Anna Sulzle in 1964 and took a pastorate in Flensburg. In 1966, Bonnke announced that his family would be leaving to minister in Africa. By May 1967, the family of three had landed in Durban, South Africa.

The first stage of Bonnke's African ministry was as a denominational missionary. From 1967-1974, Bonnke worked with the Apostolic Faith Mission. The majority of his time was spent in Lesotho church planting and organizing a Bible correspondence course. Despite the fact that he experienced a modicum of success in these ministries, Bonnke, a perfectionist with a clear calling as an evangelist, wanted to see an even greater response to the Christian gospel.

The vision which confirmed a personal desire to see a grand scale evangelistic ministry came in 1972. It was a recurring vision of:

"the continent of Africa being washed in the blood of Jesus. Over and over he heard the Holy Spirit whisper, 'Africa shall be saved, Africa shall be saved.'"¹⁰²

It was as a result of this vision that Bonnke set up the organization, Christ for All Nations. For a time, Bonnke continued his affiliation with the Apostolic Faith Mission, but used Christ for All Nations to carry out those strategies not approved by the mission board.

Evangelistic strategy appears to be the issue which finally led Bonnke to part paths with the Apostolic Faith Mission:



"I was a hard working missionary in Lesotho, but the dream of a blood-washed Africa haunted me. The vision became more persistent and vivid. An all-consuming desire drove me to make my first ventures. But I was still hesitant. The members of the mission board disapproved, good and spiritual men that they were. Karl Barth wrote, 'Faith is never identical with piety.' Normal missionary work was the fruitful approach to the salvation of Africa they believed, not mass evangelism. Why did I think I could do it differently? If this was God's way, why were other men not doing it? Missionaries were content with the mission tradition-were they wrong and was I right? I felt isolated. Then I met with a group of evangelists for fellowship, and everyone had a story to tell that was similar to mine. They shared a common experience of official discouragement...During these birth pangs, many times in agony of mind, I had to spend hours in prayer to keep my poise and peace. How long would it take to bring about a blood-washed Africa without aggressive evangelistic crusades?...The pressure reached a crisis point. One day I locked myself in a hotel room in Lesotho to pray. I was determined that I would not let God go until I had a clear word from Him. I boldly put before the Lord exactly how I felt and said that I was sick and tired of the strain-constrained to evangelize, but restrained by men...That day God made matters clear to me. As frankly as I had spoken to the Lord, He spoke in reply. He said, 'If you drop the vision which I have given you, I shall have to look for another man who will accept it and do what I want.' I repented of my hesitations immediately. I made my decision, for ever. God then began to smile upon me and give me divine encouragement. Since that day, I have not looked back. I learned how to handle critics and their criticisms by letting God Himself become my Defender. Let them see the Lord has led me by the fruit which it bears, I decided. I concentrated on what He wanted me to do and the ministry and the results grew-step by step, dimension to dimension, sometimes rather dramatically."¹⁰³

Toward the end of his missionary years in Lesotho, Bonnke had a very practical experience which clearly foreshadowed his ministry as a healing evangelist. The story is told that Bonnke had invited a well-known healing evangelist to preach in his church in Maseru; the evangelist preached the first evening but held no prayer for the sick. People left disappointed. The next day the evangelist told Bonnke that he "felt led by God" to go home and he left the city. With no other option, Bonnke himself took the platform. As he preached:

"...an anointing of the Holy Spirit fell upon the people. Never before had he experienced the power of God with such intensity...As he stood there he heard: 'My Words in your mouth are just as powerful as My Words in My own mouth'...the 'voice' repeated the sentence. Then...like a movie film he 'saw' the power of the Word of God. God spoke and it happened...I suddenly realized that the power was not in the mouth-the power was in the Word."¹⁰⁴

Several people were miraculously healed as Bonnke followed his sermon with prayers for the sick. From this day forward Bonnke was convinced of his calling as a healing evangelist.

Bonnke has gained his insights on healing over a period of time and he now believes that God has put him in the role of "nurse" with Jesus as the Great Physician:

"...I suddenly realized that it is the duty of the doctor to diagnose the disease, and it is the duty of the doctor to prescribe the medicine and all that I have to do is follow behind the doctor and carry the medicine. It just remains for me to administer it the way it is prescribed-and then it works. The medicine is red in colour '...by His stripes we are healed', the prescription says'...and they shall lay

hands on the sick and the sick shall recover.' So all I am is a nurse-and I'm very happy to be one for Jesus."¹⁰⁵

As a healing evangelist, Reinhard Bonnke appears less concerned than either Kenneth Hagin and W. F. Kumuyi about the reasons for why and how only some people are healed:

"Many churchmen and medical doctors have opposed divine healing. They have made much of those who are 'disappointed' and who are not healed immediately. They forget that doctors 'disappoint' millions. Nearly everyone in the graveyard has been to a doctor first. Some church folk who object to divine healing simply because some are not healed, themselves do not minister to the sick at all. This leaves everybody unhealed. Where is compassion, or obedience to the Scriptures?"¹⁰⁶

During the months just before he planned to begin his full-time crusade ministry, Bonnke again heard the "voice" of God, an experience which gave him reassurance that God was the author of his plans. While walking home one evening, Bonnke, who needed \$30 to pay the rent, felt the power of the Lord come upon him and heard Him say:

"Do you want Me to give you one million dollars?' One million dollars!...What I could do with that amount of money! Why, with one million I could bombard the whole world with the gospel, I thought. But then, a different thought struck me. I am not at all a weepy person, but tears began running from my eyes, and I cried, 'No, Lord, don't give me one million dollars. I want more than that. Give me one million souls. One million souls less in hell and one million more in heaven-that shall be the purpose of my life.' Then the Holy Spirit quietly whispered into my very spirit words which I had never heard before-'You will plunder hell and populate heaven for Calvary's sake.' That day, a determination gripped me. I knew God had greater plans for my life, and I set out to fulfil them in progressive stages. God has granted me ever-increasing blessing and grace."¹⁰⁷

So it was that by this year it became very evident to Bonnke that God was calling him to a larger-scale ministry as a healing evangelist.

Bonnke's career change from missionary to healing evangelist led him to move his family to Johannesburg in December 1974. Within months, Bonnke had established the first headquarters of Christ for all Nations in this city. In order to quell criticism about supporting apartheid because of the office in South Africa, the organization and the Bonnke family moved, in 1987, to a new international office in Frankfurt.

The history of Bonnke's healing crusades is a long succession of city names and statistics. The figures are often amazing. His first crusade took place in Gaborone, Botswana in April 1975. The first night's meeting drew 100 people; by week's end there were 2,000 vying for the 800 seats in the auditorium. The last night of the crusade packed out the 10,000-seat sports stadium. Every year since, Bonnke has held crusades in various cities and towns all across Africa, including locations in the Muslim-dominated north. Bonnke does hold crusades in, and accept preaching invitations from, other continents, but his evangelistic zeal

remains focused on Africa. Hundreds of thousands of Africans have been Bonnke's audience over the past two decades. As we have seen, all of Africa is Bonnke's target audience. If his message continues to draw the millions it has already drawn, Bonnke will likely realize much of his goal.

Reinhard Bonnke, like each of the other men whose lives and ministries we have surveyed, is a man who is convinced of his divine calling. He, like the others, has acted decisively on this calling. We look now at some of the themes evident in the gospel as preached by Reinhard Bonnke.

Christ for All Nations-The Message

Bonnke's gospel message stresses the salvific work of Jesus Christ:

"Jesus is the beginning and end of every gospel sermon, the Alpha and the Omega of all witness. We are not doctrine mongers. We are not religion pushers. We are not enthusiasts. We are witnesses to Christ. He is the be-all-and-the-end-all of the message. What did Jesus preach? He talked about Himself. On the Emmaus road, walking with Cleopas and a friend, He explained to them, going throughout the Scriptures, the 'things concerning himself' (Luke 24.27)...Preach to convict and convert. Your job is not to entertain, not to make people smile and go home feeling cosy. Salvation is not soothing syrup. Save souls, don't stroke them! Smiling happiness will follow." 108

Pneumatologically, his message is distinctly pentecostal:

"Two thousand years ago, the Holy Spirit was poured out in Jerusalem. The tidal wave of God's power and glory gripped the whole world. But then a few centuries followed in which it appeared that the move of the Spirit was at a standstill. Many people argued that the power of the Holy Spirit was only for the first three generations of Christendom, and consequently the 'Third Article of Faith' (concerning the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity), was neglected and forgotten. The argument was, and is, totally wrong."109

"You cannot expect to live a successful Christian life if you are not in the Spirit, for that is how God arranged for you to live. Wherever we are, we can be in the Spirit, and that is the important fact...Even in the worst places, foul with the breath of hell, we ourselves are enveloped in God. 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty' (Psalm 91.1)...In our element of the Spirit we are unconquerable, invulnerable, going from victory to victory, our life hid with Christ in God. The man moving in the Spirit; the church moving in the Spirit-workers, evangelists, pastors and teachers moving in the Spirit-that is the only formula I know for success. In the Spirit of God, we can win the world for Jesus."110

Eschatologically, the message is classically pentecostal:

"At the very beginning of the twentieth century, the wave of the Holy Spirit began to rise and surface again, spontaneously and universally. That wave is still rising gloriously, gaining rapid momentum all over the world. This is, to me, one of the surest signs that the 'shore' cannot be far. Jesus is coming soon. It is the end times! It is the last hour. Hallelujah!"111

Battle language is common in the Bonnke gospel message. The world is portrayed as a battleground upon which the armies of God's angels and Satan's emissaries fight for the control of souls:

"We are not called with the outcome of an uncertain war hanging in the balance. We are called to share the victory and the spoils. God's invincible secret is the cross of Christ, which frightens every demon in hell. Heaven will be an eternal and dominating monument to the victory of the gospel...Our captain never lost a battle, and He never will...The mighty commission of Christ to His church is a call-up to the war against unbelief, using the sword of the gospel as our weapon."¹¹²

The less "aggressive" gospel theme of "God is love" is also evident in the preaching of Reinhard Bonnke:

"He gave Himself for us so that He could give Himself to us. God is love. That is what everything is about. That is why we were born; to love and be loved. To know the love of all loves is the secret of all secrets. Know that, and you possess the answer to the meaning of life. A loveless gospel is a contradiction-a sea without water, sun without light, honey without sweetness, bread without substance. The gospel is nothing other than love."¹¹³

The gospel message as preached by Bonnke is a gospel of victory. It is first and foremost a victory in the spiritual realm; "...to me the greatest miracle on earth is when a person is born into the family of God."¹¹⁴ It is secondarily a victory in the physical realm. Physical restoration is seen as an effective forerunner to the eternal, spiritual restoration.

For Bonnke, as a mass evangelist, presentation style is obviously crucial. Unlike the congregational minister and more like the car salesman, he normally has just one opportunity to captivate and convince his listeners. An Australian editor of a mainline evangelical magazine made the following observations after hearing Bonnke preach in Melbourne:

"Reinhard Bonnke's preaching style wouldn't suit the normal parish pulpit. It wouldn't be big enough. Bonnke likes to stride around the stage, bend down low, throw his arms into the air like a triumphant boxer. He's celebrating victory-the victory of Jesus. Even when he's hoarse with laryngitis and speaking through a cranked-up PA, his thickly accented German-English has a penetrating quality. He's the only man I've heard who could shout in a whisper. And shout he does. It's one of his more common voice modulations. But Bonnke leaves even the most enthusiastic American evangelist for dead. The best I've ever heard from the Land of the Eagle was a big black preacher named E. V. Hill, whose delivery never dropped below 100 decibels; Bonnke used a wider vocal range and moved like an Indian rubber man with it."¹¹⁵

An emotionally-preached pentecostal gospel, then, characterizes the message of Reinhard Bonnke. A phrase coined by Bonnke, "plundering hell to populate heaven", concisely sums up his motivation for preaching this gospel.

Christ for All Nations-Its Influence

A crusade is the usual setting for Bonnke's evangelistic healing ministry. A Bonnke crusade is a multi-day event comprising public evening services and some smaller day-time gatherings for particular segments of the population, for example, a businesspeople's prayer breakfast.

From 1977-1986, Bonnke held his crusades in a tent. The first "yellow" tent had a seating capacity of 10,000 and was quickly outgrown. The second tent, the largest gospel tent ever built with a seating capacity of 34,000, was in use by 1983. Its life-span was even more brief, just four years. Since 1986, crusades have been held in large arenas and sports stadiums. If a suitable venue cannot be located, open-air crusades are conducted.

There is much hidden activity that precedes a crusade; the cooperation with the local churches for advertising and spiritual follow-up is one of the most crucial elements. At the 1984 crusade in Harare there were 138 churches, representing 38 denominations, in support of the crusade.¹¹⁶

Another critical, hidden aspect behind a Bonnke crusade is the intercessory prayer group. As the result of a vision in 1978, Bonnke became convinced of the necessity for such a group, a large band of praying people to surround every crusade.¹¹⁷ This intercessory prayer takes place six to eight weeks before every crusade. A member of the Christ for all Nations staff, Suzette Hattingh is responsible for this ministry:

"Her special ministry is not merely to sign up prayer partners, but actually to gather thousands, instructing and leading them in true intercession. It is not a case of singing choruses and praying for a blessing, but of pulling down the strongholds of Satan. Intercessors are mighty battering rams. We are not bothered about fine words, but with the expressions of the heart. People may kneel, sit, stand, lie down before the Lord or walk around, though all under overall leadership. There is no waiting while the pastor pleads, 'Someone please lead us in prayer.' Instead, everyone prays together, just as in the Acts of the Apostles. There is liberty, but not license; freedom, but not extravagance. Every gathering must have order and respect it. But we are not afraid of people calling upon God and crying out to him, even with tears."¹¹⁸

Since 1986, Bonnke seems to have utilized leadership conferences for two general purposes: to inspire and instruct evangelists, and to increase his support base. The "Fire Conference" held in Harare in April 1986 brought together 4,000 men and women from 41 African nations to learn about and observe mass evangelism.¹¹⁹ The "Eurofire" conferences in Frankfurt in 1987 and in Birmingham in 1988 brought publicity to his ministry in Europe. Speaking to large pentecostal/charismatic conferences in the United States, such as the "Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelisation" in 1987, and the "Take It By Force" conference in 1989, has helped Bonnke to acquire American support for his ministry.

The entire budget of Christ for All Nations is financed by the donations of churches and individuals, primarily in Europe and North America. In a 1990 brochure describing the organisation's church participation programme, which operates in the United Kingdom, Norway, and the United States, we read:

"We are committed to working in all areas with the local church, to support their work, and to provide back-up for their own ministries. We have a large video and audio duplication base, as well as photocopying, faxing and typing facilities. We will be pleased to assist you and your church in any way we can..."¹²⁰

Potential supporting churches are encouraged to include the organisation in their monthly missions budget in exchange for which they will receive a video report, a press release and photos from each crusade. The object is for the congregation to "see exactly where its support is going".¹²¹

Videos, more than literature, are featured in Bonnke's ministry. In a recent ministry brochure, the several books on offer shared space with over a dozen videos. Most of these videos record Bonnke preaching at different crusades; some have even "captured" miracles. Bonnke does publish a periodical, called *Revival Report* in the English-speaking world, as the official voice of Christ for All Nations for its prayer partners world-wide.

In addition to its international office in Frankfurt, Christ for All Nations has offices in Britain, Norway and the United States. The ministry in Africa is now divided into two teams, one in East Africa and one in West Africa. On the average, ten crusades are held each year, nine in Africa and one, normally, in Asia.

Bonnke's relationship with his organization, Christ for All Nations, is of a different nature than that of the other three founders. Invariably, as the evangelist, Bonnke takes centre stage in the ministry. As well, there is no regular constituency other than his crusade support staff. Further, unlike the clues gained from the literature of the other groups, the literature in Bonnke's ministry seems to be written mostly for his world-wide supporters. We conclude, then, that the nature of the organization makes it difficult to analyse Bonnke's relationship with it.

In summary, we can say that Bonnke shares a number of theological convictions with Hagin, Kumuyi, and Cunningham. All four men are particularly convinced of the audible voice of God; God speaks to them, and to all obedient and listening Christians, through visions. The men are equally convinced of the Holy Spirit's desire and ability to heal. We have seen from the biographical sketches in this chapter that the men's varying emphases on these shared doctrines is, in large measure, a product of their histories and hermeneutics.

It is with these brief biographical sketches in mind that we now direct our attention to the heart of our task, identifying the elements of a neopentecostal missiology; our task begins in Chapter Three where we examine its biblical and theological foundations.

Chapter Three

Theology of Mission: Biblical and Theological Foundations

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work (1 John 3.8). If Christ's mission on earth was to do no less than to destroy the works of the devil, why are they so evident in the world today?...Was the work of Christ on the cross not as effective as the Bible says it was?...It was effective, and Christ has invested his power and authority in the Church. It is now our responsibility to oppose the devil's advances. This book is written in the belief that God is calling his Church today, as never before, to prepare for battle. We need to become aware that around us a spiritual battle is being waged of which we are all too ignorant. We are often blind to the spiritual dimensions of life and consequently we fail to see the extent of the enemy's attack. The Bible makes it clear...(2 Corinthians 10.3-4)...we must learn to recognize the works of the devil, and fight them in God's way. We must develop a strategy for spiritual warfare."

Peter Adams, 1987¹

A Neopentecostal Worldview

Neopentecostalism is characterized by its dualistic worldview. The good God and the evil Satan swirl autonomously across the globe, allowing and causing the events that dictate individual and corporate activity. The two immanent principles, God and Satan, are actually more than principles or forces; they are real entities, as real as their anthropomorphic biblical descriptions. God and Satan are perceived to be engaged in a fierce spiritual battle for human allegiance.

Like most Christians throughout the centuries, neopentecostals believe that good, God, will decisively triumph over evil, Satan, at the end of time. Not only is there the assumption that God *will* win the final battle with Satan, there is also the belief that the Holy Spirit is equally potent for the temporal skirmishes. It is a victorious scenario, both in the immediate and intimate as well as in the future and final.

Due to the nature of their ministry, the Rhema and Deeper Life churches appear to lay more stress on the immediate and intimate victories for the individual believer, while the missionary organisations, YWAM and Christ for All Nations, appear to emphasize the future and final victory. Of the former type of optimism we quote from Hagin:

"...God has delivered us from the power, or the authority, of darkness. That is, He has delivered us from Satan's authority. From demons. From sickness. From

disease. From poverty. God has delivered us from everything that belongs to Satan...Instead of Satan's reigning over us, we are to reign over him...Spirit-filled Christians...ought to be happy and joyous, filled with life and light. Let's rise up and take advantage of what belongs to us. How is it that we're going to reign? By Christ Jesus!"²

Of the more universal type of optimism, Reinhard Bonnke asserts that:

"We are not called with the outcome of an uncertain war hanging in the balance. We are called to share the victory and the spoils. God's invincible secret is the cross of Christ, which frightens every demon in hell. Heaven will be an eternal and dominating monument to the victory of the gospel. These pages are a welcome to join a conquering army, not a plea to support a hopeless and desperate resistance against overwhelming odds. Our Captain never lost a battle, and He never will."³

It is important to note that neopentecostal optimism does not extend far beyond the bounds of the Church; in fact, there is a conspicuous absence of enthusiasm concerning the present world order. Although there is reference to effecting change in society by electing Christians to influential posts and to "taking whole nations for the Lord", neopentecostals appear generally pessimistic toward the present world order. A premillennial eschatology seems to account for much of this underlying neopentecostal pessimism concerning the present world order. Further, through neopentecostal preaching and literature one gains a clear sense of the imminent return of Christ; therefore, because time is short the Church's first priority must be the conversion of the non-Christian world. Like many other Christians, neopentecostals believe that the misery and injustices of this present world order will come to their final end when Christ returns; there is, therefore, a longing for that hour.

It is, however, the perceived scope, intentionality and intensity of the contemporary spiritual battle that distinguishes the neopentecostal worldview from most other worldviews. Everything in life, from a job promotion to the demise of a world leader to a headache, can be attributed to God or Satan. There are no viable concepts of luck or chance; all events are understood to be either divine blessing or satanic attack. All good and pleasant things and events are seen as the blessing or will of God and all evil and unpleasant things and events are seen as the work of Satan.

This dualistic worldview is especially apparent in our two churches, Rhema and Deeper Life. Kumuyi writes in his book *Curses and Cures* :

"The Bible states, unequivocally, that men and women are either blessed or cursed. It also highlights the complete cure for every curse..."⁴

Hagin refers often to the "unseen forces which surround us", both powers of heaven and powers of darkness.⁵ Human life is defined by both these men in the "either/or" language of "God's blessing" or "Satan's curse".

Neither YWAM's nor Bonnke's understanding of evil seems to extend as far as that of Kumuyi and Hagin; Kumuyi and Hagin's definitions of evil are all-encompassing. Hagin writes:

"-Galatians 3.13, 14, 29...Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law! What is the curse of the law?...The expression 'the law' as found in the New Testament usually refers to the Pentateuch...as we go back to these books-or the law-we find that the curse, or punishment, for breaking God's law is threefold: poverty, sickness, and spiritual death."⁶

Kumuyi is in accord with Hagin on what defines "evil":

"A curse generally emanates from an enemy. Without doubt your enemy does not want you to be happy, healthy or prosperous. Neither does your enemy desire that you get to heaven. The devil, the arch-enemy of your soul, does not wish you anything good..."⁷

We see that, in the mind of both ministers, then, many unpleasant circumstances qualify as a part of "the curse". Evil events are categorically associated with the devil and his demons. Again, nothing bad can be seen as a "freak of nature" or as "a spell of bad luck"; there is a cause and a cure for every type of evil.

This neopentecostal perception of a dualistic, spiritually-active universe is coupled with a perception of what we might call the "material neighbourhood". The material neighbourhood is the everyday world in which we live. Battles originating in the heavenly realm are believed to be fought out in this physical, fleshly realm. Conflicts between good and evil are believed to be raging within individuals, groups, and nations. While other Christian communions concur theoretically on the reality of spiritual warfare, they differ substantially over combat strategies.

In general, neopentecostals have imbibed a pentecostal perspective on the issue of spiritual warfare. Central to the teaching of both groups is the belief that most, if not all, events and circumstances have a spiritual origin; as a result, they use spiritual measures to precipitate blessings or alter curses. Neo/pentecostals assert that Christians have the power and the privilege to control the conditions of their lives, as well as the lives of their families and the conditions of a neighbourhood, city or country. As distinct and powerful as are the powers of God and Satan which hover above and below, Christians are no mere Job-like puppets on the universal stage;

they are endued with spiritual power for controlling evil and encouraging good. Illustrative of neo/pentecostals altering what they believe to be a curse are the prayers for divine healing; for many neo/pentecostals, illness is defined as a satanic attack. This is especially true in the Nigerian context, where curses are believed to be an integral part of everyday life.

Let us look first at the notion of controlling evil, both in the Christian world and in society. Kumuyi and Hagin teach their followers that the Christian can control, and even eliminate, evil circumstances. It is most remarkable to note the amount of control the individual can exercise over evil. Kumuyi writes:

"You can be blessed everyday of your life and you can ride on the crest of victory throughout your pilgrimage on earth. But everything depends on you. If you invite a curse it will come. How? By disobeying the Lord... (Deuteronomy 28.20). If you fail to hearken to the word of God a curse will come upon you. If you commit sin, you are building a bridge on which the devil will walk to inflict a curse upon you...If you separate yourself from sin then the devil cannot touch you. If you remain in righteousness and faith, following after the Lord, the wicked will never touch you. You are not the only one who will enjoy that type of protection. If you bring your children up in the way of the Lord and they join you in obeying the word of God, nobody will be able to inflict a curse upon them...(Colossians 3.1-3). If your life is hid in Christ you are protected. Sickness, calamity, evil, curses, cannot come upon you..."⁸

Hagin has developed this teaching even further; his teaching reads much like a formula:

"When Christ arose from the dead with all authority in heaven and earth, He delegated the authority on earth to the Church, the believers. It is now up to us as believers to do something with the authority that God has given us. It is not up to God. It is up to us to believe, and to act upon what we believe. Paul wrote to the Church at Ephesus, '*Neither give place to the devil*' (Ephesians 4.27). What does this mean? It means that we should not give the devil any place in us, because the devil cannot dominate us in any way unless we allow him to do it. When we resist the devil and make the right confessions, we maintain our dominion over the devil. But if our confessions are not in line with the Word of God, then they glorify the devil, and they fill our hearts with a spirit of fear and weakness...We must tell the devil, 'The Word of God says that Jesus defeated you. You are a defeated foe, devil. The New Testament-the New Covenant that God has established with man through the blood of Christ-says that you have no authority over me, Satan-but, rather, I have authority over you! Satan, leave me alone,because you are defeated!'...We will rise above all satanic influence when we declare, '*...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*' (1 John 4.4). Greater is Christ who is within us than any force that is arrayed against us. Our confession is the battleground on which we fight. And it is here that we determine whether we will succeed or fail."⁹

Neopentecostals believe that they can also claim large scale victories over evil. The corporate evil of a city or other geographical area prompts neopentecostals to

talk about "taking whole cities and countries for God". This theme is especially prominent in YWAM circles. Floyd McClung writes:

"Demonic bondage is normally associated with individuals. But when one observes the moral disintegration of our society, the possibility of large-scale spiritual warfare against entire cities or nations seems possible...If we have a view of sin that is limited to personal choices, we will miss an important truth: cities and nations take on a spiritual character and life of their own. This corporate spiritual character is potentially good or evil, dependent on the response of the people to God or Satan...Just as victory was won in the wilderness through exercise of spiritual authority by the Lord Jesus Christ, we must challenge the lies of Satan that he hurls at the world today. His strongholds are there, but they are vulnerable to those who resist them with truth and righteousness. Our primary weapons against Satan start on a personal level and extend to the corporate warfare of the church and its role in society."¹⁰

Cunningham articulates some of YWAM's strategy:

"We must pray that leaders will become Christians and advocate Christian principles, or be replaced by those who will. Our battle is not fought in hatred or violence. Our battle is in the heavenlies. Our goal is to take over the kingdoms of this world...and bring them under the kingdom of our Christ...Leaders must be trained to go into these classrooms of society to mold and train the nations for Christ."

As we disciple the nations by giving them godly economic systems, Bible-based forms of government, education anchored in God's Word, families with Jesus at the head, entertainment that portrays God in His variety and excitement, media that is based on communicating the truth in love, and churches that serve as sending stations for missionaries into all areas of society, we will see the fulfillment of the Great Commission and multiplied millions coming into the Kingdom of God."¹¹

Not only do neopentecostals believe that they can control evil, they also believe that they can precipitate blessings. Again, this teaching is most clear in our two case study churches. In an article entitled, "The Gateway to God's Greater Blessings," Hagin writes:

"Not only does God's Word tell us what His best is, God's Word also tells us how to get it. It's up to us whether or not we receive God's best. You will never know what God's best is unless you know what the Word says because God's Word is His will...A lack of knowledge of God's Word is an enemy to faith. A lack of knowledge of the Word kept me bedfast for sixteen long months. But I finally came to the point during my sickness where I just began to give my time wholly to studying God's Word. Then after much study, I saw the exact steps to take in prayer, and I saw just how to release my faith for healing. As a result, I was healed and raised up from a deathbed. If I had known before what I finally learned about faith and healing, I could have been off that deathbed much sooner than I was. . . it was my lack of knowledge that hindered my faith. But as soon as I found out what God's Word says and acted upon that, I got results..."¹²

Although not quite as emphatic as Hagin, Kumuyi also encourages his flock to "decide on what they want from God". In his book, *Prayer Made Easy* he writes:

"But let him ask in faith nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways.' James 1.6-8. God discountenances doubt and indecision...If you are unstable in prayer, you cannot excel. But I am persuaded that you want to excel. You want your prayer to be answered. So you should be decided on what you want God to do for you...Decide on what you want from God. Let it be definite...Having found the scriptural promises that back up your prayer request, read them to yourself. The knowledge of what God says concerning your request takes you a step nearer the answer to your prayer...After you have prayed, leave it in the hand of God, do not worry any more. Do not think about the request as though God had not known about it...Shun doubt by asserting and believing that these things which you prayed for shall come to pass and you shall have whatsoever you prayed for. 'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous...and then thou shalt have good success.' Joshua 1.8. Note that this scripture did not say God will make thy way prosperous. Rather, it says 'thou shalt make thy way prosperous'. In other words, taking this step guarantees success, prosperity and blessing...It takes personal initiatives. You must decide to meditate on the promises..."¹³

Kumuyi and Hagin believe, then, that Christians are not only able to limit evil but secure material and spiritual blessings for themselves in the material neighbourhood. In popular parlance we hear these men telling people: "It's up to you; you determine your destiny. If you're crippled, in need of cash, jobless, barren, even if you've only got a headcold, it's because you're not claiming what is already yours in Christ. Only a curse explains your condition. Live right. Say the right words. You can be victorious...." In essence, these men tell their audiences that there is no need to suffer along with any earthly ill. In fact, suffering is likely to be an indicator of unconfessed sin or weak faith. Theologically, neopentecostals identify with Jesus' resurrection; because Jesus overcame the grip of death, Christians need only not suffer, but their lives should be characterised by abundance in every area.

This neopentecostal worldview highlights at least two valuable theological tenets which are often glossed in non-neo/pentecostal church traditions. The first tenet reinforced by neo/pentecostals is the reality of spiritual warfare and the power of the Spirit for such battles. Matthew 4 records that Jesus himself was not exempt from Satan's tempting offers of power. St. Paul reiterates the fact that Christians need the Spirit and a complete set of God's armour to fight the enemy (Ephesians 6.10ff.). The second tenet highlighted by neo/pentecostals is the fact that we can ask God for good things. It was Jesus himself whom Matthew represents as saying: "Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened...how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7.7,11). However, in non-neo/pentecostal churches, a more common teaching on this text seems to be concerned primarily with the qualifications

and abuses of such asking rather the goodness of God. In its bold language on seeking God's blessings, neopentecostalism serves as a reminder that "God does desire good gifts for his children".

At the same time, however, we must question the orthodoxy of Hagin and Kumuyi's teaching that physical suffering is always contrary to God's will for the Christian. While both men teach that Christians can expect to suffer persecution for "righteousness' sake", they link biblical passages like Deuteronomy 28 and Galatians 3 to teach that suffering in terms of sickness and poverty is linked to disobedience.¹⁴ Yet, there are other scriptural examples that clearly point to the possibility that redemptive suffering is concomitant with God's will. The obvious Old Testament illustration is the good and upright man called Job; we are told that there was no sin in his life and yet he "got it all". We remember that Job's friends scrutinized his life, searching for the sin that had caused his misfortunes; they found none. This story, while an extreme illustration, appears to contradict the Deuteronomic notion of divine retribution. Job, a righteous man, did not get what he deserved; he deserved to be blessed as a reward for his "blameless and upright life" (Job 1.1). The disasters that befell this good man blast the casual relationship between sin and calamity; there are, in point of fact, times when bad circumstances fall upon righteous people.

There is even more evidence of redemptive suffering in the New Testament. The congenitally blind man is one such example. When his disciples saw this man and asked Jesus who had sinned, the man or his parents, Jesus replied that neither had sinned: "he was born blind so that God's power might be displayed in curing him" (John 9.3). The healing of Lazarus can be understood in a similar manner. Jesus indicates that Lazarus' death was an occasion for the manifestation of his glory and healing power: "This illness will not end in death; it has come for the glory of God, to bring glory to the Son of God" (John 11.4). There is no indication that Lazarus had died prematurely due to some sin in his life. St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" is another time in which God used an irritant for his greater glory. When he prayed that it might be removed, St. Paul was denied. St. Paul's thorn represents suffering which even the righteousness and faith of one of the greatest Apostles could not dispel. These situations are examples of redemptive suffering which were not the result of sin or unbelief.

The exceptional, yet paradigmatic, illustration of redemptive, sinless suffering is, of course, Jesus' humiliation and death. Although Jesus' life had its sunny Galilee

and Easter morning, it also had its Good Friday. Jesus' life ended by crucifixion, and the biblical narrative clearly indicates that this painful death was God's intention for his life. Integral, then, to Christ's words: "If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine, he must leave self behind; day after day he must take up his cross, and come with me..." (Luke 9.23), is the likelihood of suffering. For Christians, who are called to follow Christ and drink his cup, not all suffering can be attributed to Satan or disobedience; it is an element of the Christian life.

Therefore, Kumuyi and Hagin err theologically by teaching that all physical suffering is necessarily a curse or a sign of God's punishment. Their teaching is refuted by biblical precedent, most clearly by the life of Jesus. The suffering of Job, Lazarus, St. Paul, and Jesus all challenge the neopentecostal notion of direct retribution. Further, in his teachings, Jesus himself does not unequivocally endorse a notion of divine retribution. We see, then, that this simplistic, cause and effect understanding of suffering does not hold up in the tribunal of Christian history.

Besides regulating good and evil circumstances in the material neighbourhood, neopentecostals are also concerned to participate in the battle which is being fought for the souls of non-Christians. That is, alongside their interest in controlling the course of their own lives, neopentecostals perceive themselves as recruits for the "Divine Army". These recruits are more than just sword-bearers; they are the swashbuckling front-line warriors. Their primary task is to snatch souls from the gates of hell for the Kingdom of God; it is their duty to present people with the opportunity to "accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour". We see by their evangelistic intentions, then, that neopentecostals are also concerned with others' spiritual and material destinies; this is a prominent feature of all of our case study groups except Rhema.

In the material neighbourhood, only one element (besides death itself) seems to lie beyond the absolute power of the individual Christian: deciding on the time of salvation. Yet, even here neopentecostals reflect the evangelical arminian tradition of "choosing to accept Christ" rather than the passive calvinistic tradition of "election". Consonant with evangelical arminianism, neopentecostals believe that one's response to the person and work of Jesus Christ determines one's final destiny. Reinhard Bonnke writes:

"The gospel has to do with God, and God has to do with eternity. Our destiny is bound up in the gospel. 'Are you saved or lost?'-that is the question of all questions. The declaration of the gospel is 'Jesus saves'. He saves from wrath,

judgement, hell, bondage, the Devil and darkness. He saves us from dying in our sins."¹⁵

With the exception of YWAM which is committed to social services, our case study groups are caught up in a highly spiritualised material neighbourhood. It is a community characterised by the wielding of various spiritual powers. There are powers used to revoke the effects of curses, powers used to invoke blessings, and powers used to evangelise. All four of our case study groups define the world as a spiritual battleground; of paramount importance to our groups, then, is thorough preparation for such battles on both the personal and evangelistic fronts.

Because the material neighbourhood is, first and foremost, a spiritual realm within which the individual and familial needs of church (or mission) members are met as fully as possible, addressing the injustices wrought by society is generally beyond its scope. Kenneth Hagin's writings reflect this limited scope. Of the nearly ninety Hagin titles listed in 1988, all but a handful pertain to benefits and powers available to the Christian. The writings of Kumuyi and Bonnke combine Hagin's themes with a clear emphasis on evangelism. Only in YWAM's literature do we see developed the non-spiritual concerns of the material neighbourhood.

From the neopentecostal vantage point, there appears to be no contradiction or tension in factoring human choice into a sharply dualistic worldview. There are, in fact, three principle players on the world stage: God, Satan, and spirit-filled Christians. Consequently, fatalism has been replaced by choice. Individual Christians have access to a spiritual power which assists them in determining the events and quality of their lives; therefore, there need be no victims, only victors, in the neopentecostal worldview. In this worldview, believers are not subject to the vagaries of evil if sufficiently clad in the armour of faith. Hagin Jr. writes:

"The command to 'put on the whole armour of God' implies that there is activity the Christian is engaged in which requires armour. Defensive armour is for protection; that is why faith is a shield. A shield is designed to protect the wearer from flying objects...The shield of faith and all the armour of God are provided for us so that we will use it in standing our ground against the enemy...The full armour of God includes an offensive weapon: '*...the sword of the Spirit, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD*' (Ephesians 6.17). The sword of the Spirit must be kept sharp at all times. That means you must know the Word and be prepared to use it by speaking the Word out of your mouth. You can win great victories by using this offensive weapon-the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God."¹⁶

Missing in the neopentecostal worldview is a theology of sustaining grace. Neopentecostals have so stressed the steps for victorious Christian living that there is, practically speaking, no need for the grace of God beyond the conversion process.

When Hagin and Kumuyi assert that "victory or defeat is in your hands; it's all up to you", it appears that the faith in the individual's ability to believe and say the right things is as essential to the end result as the faith in God's power. Therefore, we must conclude that in the neopentecostal perception of the Christian life, God's grace and mercy are subsidiary doctrines.

In sum, the neopentecostal worldview comfortably integrates three, not two, actors into a dualistic universe; contending for the allegiance of souls are God, Satan, and Spirit-filled Christians. Most remarkable in this worldview is the amount of control that can be exercised by the Spirit-filled Christians. Since the world's evil and misfortunes are seen to be satanic in origin, they can be eliminated by Spirit-filled Christians using the greater power of God. Conversely, since all good and pleasant things are seen to be divine promises and blessings, they can be requested (and even demanded) by obedient Christians. Therefore, we see that God's supreme power can be channelled by Spirit-filled Christians for curbing all types of evil, effecting good, and evangelising the world. Simply stated, there is no necessity for Christian suffering and every reason to expect Christian abundance. While neopentecostals express little optimism for lasting change in the present world order, they are absolutely confident that God will establish a pure and perfect future world.

In the following section we examine the biblical and theological foundations of a neopentecostal theology of mission. To date, formal elaborations of neopentecostal theology are rare. The following theology of mission will be collated primarily from the writings of our four case study groups.

Hermeneutics

Our first consideration will be the neopentecostal perception of the Bible. That the Bible is the infallible word of God, hence reliable and authoritative in all matters pertaining to life and faith, is a comprehensive presupposition of the movement. As a result, we find very little space devoted to the subject of biblical authority. Brief statements of faith are the one place the Bible is usually mentioned.

As in the evangelical, fundamental and pentecostal traditions, neopentecostals read and interpret the Bible literally whenever possible, which is most of the time. The Pentecostal scholar Gordon Fee has called this approach to Scripture a pragmatic hermeneutic: "obey what should be taken literally and spiritualize, allegorize, or

devotionalize the rest."¹⁷ Like evangelicals and fundamentalists, neopentecostals differ over which portions of the Bible should be obeyed literally.

In a pentecostal manner, neopentecostals are characterized by their devotion to the Scriptures. This devotion can be either a devotion to the biblical text itself, or to biblical authority, or both. In either instance neopentecostals usually quote verses or references to support their suppositions.¹⁸ They believe that since God is the inspiration behind the Bible it follows logically that the Bible is reliable in all its components; to substantiate this point neopentecostals might quote 2 Timothy 3.16 which reads: "Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living..." The pentecostal commitment to biblical authority has been described by Russell Spittler, a pentecostal professor:

"Biblical authority here means supreme and final regard for the teachings of the Bible (traditionally the King James Version in Anglo-Saxon circles) for both faith and conduct. This view of the Bible is pre-critical and largely ahistorical. That is, Pentecostals did not conclude biblical authority from the outcome of two centuries of scientific biblical criticism...It is important to see that biblical authority is the operative value and not biblical exegesis or interpretation. Even biblical inspiration must be seen as a derivative of the authority of Scripture. Though many Pentecostals would not readily agree, much of their understanding of Scripture reflects a well-developed tradition about what Scripture teaches. Ministerial candidates are not asked what a given passage may mean or how it may be applied homiletically. They are quizzed to see if their understanding of Scripture accords with the commonly accepted views. No fresh interpretations of the Bible are sought: rarely would any official group be charged to discover what the Bible teaches on a particular topic. Rather, indoctrination programs convey 'those things which are most surely believed among us', to echo Luke 1.1 with a Pentecostal accent. Even if unacknowledged, there is a considerable, oral body of traditional interpretation among Pentecostals, even though there is much room for varied views on certain lesser points."¹⁹

The ahistorical streak which characterizes both the pentecostal and neopentecostal movements is unfortunate and dangerous. Nils Bloch-Hoell identifies this "well-known spiritualistic principle" as "a kind of biblicism which neither makes allowance for the history of the church nor is able to consider the Scriptures historically".²⁰ With no points of reference beyond their own "flash histories" and the New Testament narrative, both movements, especially the younger neopentecostal movement, are susceptible to theological heresies. Furthermore, in relating with the world-wide communion, neo/pentecostals often exude an unpalatable and offensive pomposity.²¹

Spittler's observation touches on the obvious fact that no reading and interpretation of the Bible can be executed *in vacuo*. As the theological offspring of

pentecostalism, neopentecostals have read and understood the Bible through pentecostal-tinted spectacles. Since the neopentecostals' biblical understanding is so obviously related to the pentecostal hermeneutic, they would benefit by having a familiarity with this tradition.

Authority Re-examined

There are at least two subtle, but crucial, differences which distinguish the neopentecostal hermeneutic from its pentecostal parent. The first of these is the high place given to the writings of its leaders. The importance of the prolific writings of Kumuyi and Hagin in Deeper Life and Rhema, respectively, is striking; at times, their writings appear to have achieved nearly canonical status. Except for a series of Sunday School materials, all the writings of Deeper Life are from Kumuyi's pen.²² Kenneth Hagin has set up his own publishing firm which exclusively publishes his and his son's literature. By contrast, the nature and diversity of YWAM and the scant literature of Christ for All Nations (CfAN) help to guard these organisations from "a canon" of literature.

Historically, the Rhema Bible Church and the Deeper Life Church can be viewed as products of their founder's literature. We know that Hagin began publishing his literature as an independent pentecostal in the 1960s. We know that Kumuyi's literature first took the form of his University of Lagos Bible study notes. The point is that neither man began his writing in the context of a pastoral ministry. It was not until Hagin and Kumuyi's teachings were published, however informally, that the ministries of Rhema and Deeper Life, respectively, expanded.

Because neither Hagin nor Kumuyi minister under the auspices of a denomination, they are more prone to develop a personalized hermeneutic. While both men are adamant in their affirmation of biblical authority and proper hermeneutic techniques, their hermeneutic is controlled and filtered through their experiences. For example, Kumuyi's teaching on marriage changed considerably once he, himself, married; similarly, Hagin tells his readers that he has changed his teachings on various topics, most notably prosperity, as a result of divine visions.²³ This evolving hermeneutic is reflected, chronologically, in their literature.

Kumuyi and Hagin's evolving hermeneutic points to a second factor which distinguishes neopentecostalism from the pentecostal tradition; this is its greater tendency to exalt the Holy Spirit's revelations over the Bible itself. Of our case

studies, Rhema is the most susceptible to such unorthodox practice. Charles Farah, Jr. relates an extreme version of this tendency whilst conversing with a Rhema student in Oklahoma. The student told Farah that he no longer had to read his Bible because he got it all "direct" (from the Holy Spirit).²⁴ Actually, when we consider that Hagin's autobiography relates a similar claim of "I got mine direct from God", we can better understand the student's assertion. Hagin's autobiography is entitled *I Believe in Visions* and is, in essence, a chronicle of his numerous extraordinary visions.

Hagin's autobiography is not the only one of his works in which he claims to have received new interpretations on specific topics. Those doctrines which have distinguished Hagin, those that relate to perfect health and realised wealth, are usually linked to a particular vision which Hagin retells in his literature. Illustrative of this is the booklet, *How God Taught Me About Prosperity*; the booklet opens with these words:

"The subject of prosperity is currently so misunderstood in the church world that I feel I must comment on it. The Lord Himself taught me about prosperity. I never read about it in a book. I got it directly from heaven..."²⁵

While all of our case study leaders claim to have had direct divine revelations, only Hagin appears to have transformed revelations into new teachings for the Church. While it is true that Kumuyi appears to reiterate many of Hagin's teachings on prosperity and health, Kumuyi does not claim that they are the result of direct revelation; instead, he points to various Scripture texts as their source. To justify his new teachings, Hagin asserts that the Church has misinterpreted certain Scripture texts:

"...we young preachers swallowed whatever our elders said about prosperity; we didn't take the time to examine the Word of God on the subject..."²⁶

Through divine inspiration, Hagin claims to have a corrected interpretation of a series of biblical texts, particularly those relating to health and prosperity.

Hagin's principle of biblical interpretation creates a "hermeneutical hell". Instead of interpreting a particular revelation in the light of the whole of Scripture, Hagin appears to interpret his heavenly revelations in the light of only some scriptures. Overlooked are those scriptures that shed unfavourable light on his revelation. And yet, if God was the one who granted the revelation and directed Hagin to certain scriptures, is God also guilty of proof-texting by only directing Hagin to

supportive scriptures? In the end, we are left with the distinct impression that Hagin is comfortable with promoting selective "evidence" for his new revelations-turned-teachings.

At stake in our discussion is no less than the issue of biblical authority. Implied in Hagin's hermeneutic is the notion that biblical authority can be supplemented, and at times even superseded, by personal revelation. His teachings, direct from God and not mediated through the Scriptures, are taught on a par alongside standard orthodox Christian teachings. That Hagin's followers are encouraged (albeit cautiously) to believe that they, too, can be led by divine personal revelation leads to the confused theology demonstrated by the Rhema student interviewed by Farah.²⁷ Just the mention of this possibility shakes the hermeneutical ground beneath many Protestant feet. Gerald Pillay has described such a possibility as an "antithesis in pentecostal thinking":

"While on the one hand the Bible is given paramount authority as 'the final word' on any matter of faith, on the other, ample room is allowed for the Holy Spirit to teach and guide over and above the Scriptures. While some will say this is not possible in view of their belief in the 'closed canon' of Scripture they have also to admit an inconsistency in the de facto acceptance of the Spirit as having 'much greater authority' than the Bible. In order to account for this tension some leaders of the Pentecostal churches maintain that the Spirit points only to Christ who gives the Bible its authority. Nevertheless congregations generally understand that the Spirit can, and does, communicate the will of God directly and not necessarily in the words of the Scripture." ²⁸

What Pillay has observed in pentecostal theology, we see also in neopentecostal theology. While biblical authority is promoted in word, individual spiritual revelation is promoted in practice. What is the superior guiding principle when the two, Bible and revelation, conflict? Are the scriptures that would contradict the "special revelation" put aside as "not applicable in this case"? It appears that in some neopentecostal circles the answer is, in practice, "yes".

Terminology-"Salvation"

Terminology is an essential key to understanding missionary praxis. How a particular confession defines "salvation" and "evangelism" is based upon its understanding of the Scriptures. The neopentecostal understanding of "salvation" most resembles the classic pentecostal definition. It is, first and foremost, an individual spiritual salvation received by faith alone through the efficacious death

and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Also inherent in the neopentecostal definition of "salvation" is redemption from bodily and circumstantial ills.

Probably due to its evangelical connections, YWAM is the least vocal in proclaiming bodily redemption as an integral element of salvation. Only general reference to the power of the Holy Spirit is made in a YWAM document called the Manila Covenant:

"We affirm that the Bible is God's inspired and authoritative word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God's Son. We believe that man is created in God's image and that He created us to have eternal life through Christ. Although all men have sinned and come short of God's glory and are eternally lost without Christ, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that repentance, faith, love and obedience are necessary and fitting responses to God's initiative of grace towards us and that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. We believe that the Holy Spirit's power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ's last commandment..."²⁹

The founder of Deeper Life, Kumuyi is less ambiguous. He explains salvation:

"'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...' The moment you receive what He has given, confess and repent of your sins and forsake them, your sins are forgiven. Your life is changed. Your spirit is quickened. You are pardoned. Your name is written in the Book of Life. That is the salvation experience. The spirit of God then bears witness with your heart that you are now a child of God...The moment you get saved, you should be seeking for the opportunity in the Church to get baptized in water. It is the public confession of the name of the Lord-Your new Lord and Master."³⁰

Kumuyi teaches that Baptism in the Holy Spirit follows salvation:

"...it is unprofitable to seek for the baptism in the Holy Ghost without having the love of the brethren, unity with the brethren-the sanctification experience...if you are saved and sanctified-filled and overflowing with sacrificial love and desiring to serve without pay, praise or recognition, the Lord will baptize you in the Holy Ghost..."³¹

Hagin talks about three baptisms integral to salvation:

"There is no salvation apart from the Name of Jesus, and apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the One Name through which the sinner can approach the Great Father God...Acts 4.12...The believer is not only saved by the Name-but the believer is baptized into the Name-and on the ground of the Name he receives the gift of the Holy Spirit...Acts 2.38...The Bible teaches that there are three baptisms available to every person in the Name of Jesus: (1) baptism into the Body of Christ at the new birth; (2) baptism into water; (3) baptism into the Holy Spirit. The believer can be baptized in the Holy Spirit, and speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance...Acts 1.5...It is on the ground of the Name of Jesus that we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost...Jesus Himself declared, 'IN MY NAME...they shall speak with new tongues' (Mark 16.17)."³²

The most fiery language on salvation comes from the evangelist Bonnke:

"We are not saved by denying ourselves and carrying our own cross. We are saved by the redeeming power of the atoning death of Jesus Christ, like the thief who turned to the Lord while dying on the cross next to Him...The gospel is a miracle itself, and you cannot take the miraculous out of it. To preach a no-miracle gospel results in the creation of miracle-free zones, which, regretfully, some churches are. It is not addressed to guilty spirits, but to guilty men and women, suffering in their bodies for their sins. Jesus forgives and heals as part of the process. This is how it is preached in the power and demonstration of the Spirit'. Otherwise, how can the gospel be a demonstration of power if it is all spiritual and not physical? Christ is the Healer, and His healing extends in every direction-towards soul, body, mind, circumstances." ³³

The neopentecostal definition of salvation, then, is first and foremost a personal salvation involving a two-fold liberation from both spiritual and physical bondage. This interpretation stands in marked contrast to most historic Protestant and evangelical/fundamentalist interpretations of salvation. Most evangelicals and nearly all fundamentalists define salvation in almost purely spiritual terms, while the historic Protestants and those evangelicals empathetic with the beliefs of the Evangelicals for Social Action understand salvation to include corporate elements like societal liberation from oppressive regimes and environmental stewardship. The neopentecostal understanding of salvation, however, promises a miraculous component, a supernatural promise of physical and circumstantial liberation.³⁴ It is this element of salvation, divine miraculous power, which neopentecostals triumphantly trumpet.

Neopentecostals cite a number of biblical texts to substantiate their claim that the gospel includes the promise of a holistic salvation. A salubrious gospel is understood from a passage like Isaiah 53:4-5 of which we quote verse 5: "...but he was pierced for our transgressions, tortured for our iniquities; the chastisement he bore is health for us and by his scourging we are healed."

The promise of material provision and even abundance is understood and taught from passages like Matthew 6:25-34 of which we quote verses 31-32: "No, do not ask anxiously, 'What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What shall we wear?' All these are things for the heathen to run after, not for you, because your heavenly Father knows that you need them all." Philippians 4.19 is also quoted: "And my God will supply all your wants out of the magnificence of his riches in Christ Jesus..."

The neo/pentecostal emphasis on bodily redemption can be seen as a positive addition to the Church's understanding of the concept of salvation. By promoting a

holistic salvation, neo/pentecostalism provides a balance to the characteristically overly spiritualized interpretations of these scriptures found in the evangelical and fundamentalist traditions. As well, neo/pentecostalism's expectation that miraculous healings are integral to salvation challenges the rationality of the liberal church tradition which is prone to strip the gospel of its supernatural components.

However, one visible difficulty connected with some neopentecostal's understanding of salvation is that there are still materially impoverished and physically ill neopentecostals in their midst. That this should not be the case is asserted by Kenneth Hagin; to Hagin, redemption includes redemption from sickness, poverty, and spiritual death. Having more of the right kind of faith and confessing all sin should remedy these manifestations of the curse. Kumuyi and Bonnke appear to preach a similar notion of salvation, though neither is as outspoken as Hagin on poverty being a part of the curse. YWAM takes the softest approach, focusing its redemptive teaching on just the spiritual and bodily salvation of humanity; it does not endorse a Hagin-type prosperity gospel.

Due perhaps to consanguinity, the evangelical community has historically challenged the distinctive tenets of neo/pentecostalism.³⁵ To them, neo/pentecostal preaching which promises deliverance from bodily illnesses appears particularly pernicious. The evangelical Anglican John Stott writes:

"...salvation does not mean psycho-physical health...I am not denying that according to Scripture, disease is an alien intrusion into God's good world, nor that it is often ascribed to the malevolent activity of Satan, nor that God heals both through natural means and sometimes supernaturally (for all healing is divine healing), nor that Jesus' miraculous healings were signs of his kingdom, nor that he showed both indignation towards sickness and compassion towards the sick, nor that illness, pain and death will find no place in the new bodies and the new universe which God is going one day to create. For I believe and hope that these truths are common ground. I would go further and say that a greater measure of health often follows an experience of salvation. Now that psychosomatic medicine attributes many conditions to stress, while social medicine attributes others to environmental causes, it is to be expected that salvation, because it often leads to the relief of stress and to an improved environment, will also sometimes bring healing of mind and body...Of course at the consummation, God will redeem the total creation including our human bodies, and this may rightly be termed full and final salvation, but to assert that healing is as readily and as instantly available today as salvation, or that such healing is part of the salvation which God offers us in Christ by faith now, or that believing Christians have no business ever to be ill, is an attempt to anticipate the resurrection and redemption of our bodies. Not till then will disease and death be no more."³⁶

In Stott's opinion, neo/pentecostals overstep the bounds of the definition of salvation when they preach a psycho-physical gospel. It is certainly a fact that disease, sometimes, and death, always, strike Christians, even pentecostal

Christians. This simple observation is evidence that at least some part of salvation must be construed as eschatological.

Terminology- "Evangelism"

As in the evangelical, fundamentalist and pentecostal traditions, the Great Commission forms the biblical cornerstone for the neopentecostal understanding of the term "evangelism". Jesus' words as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15 are taken as a contemporary command to "make disciples" from every nation. Evangelism is the unquestionable, primary task of the neopentecostal. A YWAM book opens with these words:

"Evangelism is the first priority of the church...This book is written out of a sense of urgency and hope. Urgency, because despite the headway the gospel is making around the world, the church continues to grow at a slower pace than the population. Urgency, because while sin continues on unchecked in our world it causes incredible pain and suffering. But, most of all, urgency because God's heart breaks every time another soul slips into a Christless eternity. It is also written in the hope that the people of God will take the Great Commission seriously, mobilise and see the task completed. It is the hope that springs from faith in a God who wants the job done, and that the kingdoms of this world will eventually become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ (Revelation 11.15)...While not all of us are called to be cross-cultural evangelists, we are all called to be witnesses..."³⁷

Kumuyi views evangelism as the primary task of every believer:

"There is no other fulfilling venture in the life of a believer, besides evangelism, the ministry of soul-winning. More than that, it is the express instruction of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It is also the main reason for the believer's existence...Ecclesiastes 12.13...God keeps you alive as a believer so that you will bear fruit, lead sinners to Christ and get involved in the expansion of the Kingdom of God. This applies to every believer. The Lord has bestowed so much grace upon you so that you will preach the gospel to those who are perishing. Evangelism is God's way of bringing spiritually dead people into the congregation of the righteous...That is why everyone that professes to be a child of God must get involved in the work that He has committed into the hand of the whole Church. If there is anything a believer ought to think about and consecrate himself to, it should be evangelism and the fulfilment of the great commission."³⁸

Reinhard Bonnke remarks in a similar vein:

"Christ's Great Commission is not a scrap of paper, blown to our feet from centuries ago. It is Jesus, standing; in the midst of His church for ever, saying, 'Go ye...for I am with you.'...If anyone wonders whether the Great Commission is 'relevant' today, they may as well ask if ploughing and harvesting are relevant-or if getting out of bed is! 'Relevant' is not the word. The task is urgent. It is supposed to be our existence. A Christian is a witness. The name 'Christian' arose because it easily identified believers-they were the people who always talked about Christ. Witnessing is the commerce of the people of the kingdom of God...The Great Commission is 'our baby', and our work in this task is not optional...We do not

serve at our discretion. The Great Commission is a draft 'call-up', not a suggestion for our consideration."³⁹

Only scant reference to evangelism comes from the literature of the Rhema Bible Church. One of Hagin's few references to the subject is made the context of the boldness Christians need for claiming what is theirs in Christ. Interesting to note is how the topic of evangelism is not prioritised:

"Ephesians 6.19,20...So we see that the Early Church prayed for boldness to preach the Word, and that Paul asked other believers to pray for him to boldly proclaim the gospel. *You* also should pray for God to give you boldness in your spiritual walk. The more you pray and thank God for boldness, the bolder you will become...Believers should have boldness in three different worlds. Our boldness should be exercised toward *heaven*, toward *earth*, and toward *hell*...Second...we are to be bold to proclaim the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ to people on this earth...Be bold to use the Name of Jesus! Proclaim the truth on this earth that Jesus has all the authority and power He ever had, and that all of His authority and power is invested in His mighty Name!"⁴⁰

There is only a little more on the subject from Hagin, Jr., who includes an apologetic for the "faith message":

"This faith message we preach is not a get-rich-quick scheme. I believe in prosperity as much as anyone else, and I believe the Word of God teaches it, but the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ does not exist for you to live in fine houses, wear fine clothes, and drive fine automobiles. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ exists for the salvation of men's souls. The main message is Jesus Christ and Him crucified...I realize some people have taken the things we preach and have perverted them. However, if they would listen to what Brother Hagin has to say, they would discover that the first thing any born-again, Spirit-filled Christian should be involved with is a vision for a lost and dying world. I have a vision of the world. I have dreamed a dream of the world. I have traveled in it. I have preached in those mud huts and brush arbors in Africa. I love those people. They need God...My heart cries within me when I think of the teeming millions around the world who have heard about Jesus and have accepted Him in some big crusade, yet they've never been able to mature spiritually, because nobody has taught them the power of faith in God...I believe God is raising up mighty churches around the world that will preach the truth of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ-the *real* faith message."⁴¹

Of the four case studies, Rhema's definition of evangelism is certainly the most sectarian in tenor. Only the establishment of faith churches is mentioned. As well, Hagin, Jr. seems to be more concerned with the "teeming millions" of Christians who are not practicing the faith formula than with the teeming millions who have not had the opportunity to hear *any* type of Christian gospel. We are left with the impression that the Rhema Bible Church is most interested in converting both Christians and non-Christians to the "faith" gospel as preached by Kenneth Hagin and his spiritual progeny.

We get a similar impression from the Deeper Life Church that it too, like Rhema, evangelises among Christians as well as non-Christians.⁴² However, Deeper Life, unlike Rhema, appears to prioritise evangelism in general; its literature and its reputation point to a church that is committed to the completion of the Great Commission.

We have seen from their definitions of evangelism that most neopentecostals are keen to fulfil the Great Commission. Yet, just when is the Great Commission seen as completed? The answers to this question are a divisive element in the Church of the 1990s.

In the opinion of many conciliar Christians the Great Commission is now primarily the task of the local church. With the presence of a viable Church in every nation, it is now primarily the responsibility of the indigenous Church to carry out its programme of evangelism. The antiquated scenario of the "Christian sending" and "heathen receiving" countries must be erased from the mind of the Church. While this does not translate into the evangelistic task being complete, it does place the onus of evangelism on the local Christian community. The WCC believes that when those involved in independent missionary ventures cross geographical and/or cultural boundaries, their anticipated contribution should be subject to ecumenical approval. Newbigin expresses the typical WCC sentiment:

"All thinking about the world mission of the church today must thankfully and joyfully take account of the fact that the "home base" of missions is now nothing less than the world-wide community, and every proposed expression of the church's missionary outreach must be tested by asking whether it can be accepted by the whole ecumenical family as an authentic expression of the gospel."⁴³

However, neopentecostals, like evangelicals, fundamentalists, and pentecostals, view the task of evangelism as beyond the capabilities, or sometimes even the primary interest, of many national churches. Not only do these Christians see a world that is just one-third Christian, they also believe that most national churches are not effectively and aggressively evangelising the remaining two-thirds. A lack of theological vision, evangelistic enthusiasm, finances and personnel are all seen as potential hindrances to the national church's ability to make disciples. Again, all of our case study groups but Rhema consistently mention their concern over the large evangelistic task that remains. As international missions, YWAM and Bonnke naturally refer to the task at the global level. For example, YWAM's Cunningham writes:

"...the task involves more than establishing churches in each country. Every tribe, people group and language must also be represented in this crowd of the redeemed. So we must think in terms of evangelizing every unreached tribe, people group and language group remaining in the world...Some estimate that there are 17,000 distinct people groups with no gospel witness, including...unreached linguistic groups. How many extra missionaries would it take, going two by two, to reach all these groups? Why, only 34,000! That's not beyond the church of Jesus Christ today, with 250 million evangelicals, or with 1,500 million (nominal) Christians in total."⁴⁴

As a pastor, Kumuyi emphasizes local and national evangelism:

"...Myriads of souls are due for harvest. We must be moved with compassion towards them. In our own nation, many lives are being lost everyday. When you do not go into the harvest field in time you record a lot of loss...Records show that 128,000 people died in Lagos State in 1986 alone...The record we have from the ministry of Health is that about 4,315 died every month in Ogun State...The point is, many people are dying without the hope of eternal life."⁴⁵

So, to many non-conciliar Christians what is meant by the fulfilment of the Great Commission is "that every person on earth will have had the opportunity to hear, understand, and respond to the gospel, and that everyone, regardless of geographic or cultural location, will have access to a viable, evangelizing local church."⁴⁶ In this interpretation of the Great Commission there remains the sizable "unfinished task" of evangelism. Evangelism, then, is understood by neopentecostals to be a task which consists predominantly of verbalising the gospel message and planting evangelistic churches among all the world's peoples.

Questions have been raised, however, concerning the stated purpose of parachurch organizations "to strengthen the local church". Although a parachurch group may acknowledge the formal autonomy of the local, third world, church, a parachurch group, through its large support base, has the ability to superimpose its agenda and leadership on that church; this is seen as a more sophisticated form of dependency.⁴⁷ Further, there is the hazard of a church's psychological dependency on a parachurch organisation. Believing that a church's growth is dependent on the next visit of a particular speaker or evangelist is an example of this type of dependence. In spite of succumbing to some of these dangers, neopentecostals remain convinced of the necessity to preach their gospel across the globe.

Oscar Cullman, who has argued that it is the duty of every generation to partake in the evangelistic task right up to the "unknown final end", appears to champion the neopentecostal missionary conviction. There must always be an evangelistic arm of the Church says Cullman:

" Like all other 'signs', that of the missionary enterprise cannot be limited to this or that generation. For it is characteristic of this final period, in which we are living, that it forms a unity, and that as a whole it is characterized by 'signs'. But we can never say, 'this is the final hour' in which the 'sign' will appear. This means that the Reformers were wrong when they thought they could get rid of 'missions' by saying the Gospel had already been proclaimed to all nations by the Apostles. Rather, it is the essence of a 'sign' that it should appear in each generation which belongs to the present final phase of this 'age'. This means, however, that the missionary obligation covers the whole time which remains, right down to the unknown final end, and that each generation anew must proclaim the Gospel to the 'heathen' of their own day..."⁴⁸

Cullman's observation draws us once again into a consideration of the term "mission". Is the viable national church in a country, a church which may or may not wish to work in partnership with other churches to evangelize its people, a satisfactory missionary vehicle? Or is "mission" a more supranational endeavour, a task which prioritizes peoples over their geographic allegiances? Could "mission" not perhaps best be understood as a combination of the priorities of several ecclesiastical traditions? One obvious conclusion which we can make at this point is that different understandings of the reliability, authority, and priorities of Scripture lead to different interpretations of terms like "mission", "salvation" and "evangelism". We see that the neopentecostal understanding of "mission", "salvation", and "evangelism" has led neopentecostals to engage, often aggressively, in the proclamation of a personalistic gospel, a gospel promising salvation in both soul and body.

Social Dimensions of the Neopentecostal Gospel

How socially-oriented is the neopentecostal gospel? Within our case study groups we have only a small range of activity. At the one end is the evangelist Bonnke who preaches a spiritual salvation which includes physical benefits; there appears to be no social content in the Bonnke gospel. In the centre are the two churches, Rhema and Deeper Life, who conduct programmes geared to provide tangible goods for their congregations and neighbourhoods. There is some indication, however, that Deeper Life may further develop the social dimension of its message. Ojo remarks that the Nigerian charismatic community, in general, has stepped up its social message since the highly personalized message of the 1960s and 1970s; Deeper Life is slowly moving in this direction.⁴⁹ At the other end of the range is YWAM, which engages in acts of mercy such as relief and development work and literacy programmes. In YWAM's document, the Manila Covenant we read:

"We affirm our calling as a mission to love people in both word and deed in order to proclaim and demonstrate the Good News of the Gospel. Personal evangelism and practical concern alike give witness to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we will, by God's grace and mercy, proclaim the Good News and perform acts of mercy so that men and women will embrace the truth of the Gospel."⁵⁰

YWAM is the only one of the four neopentecostal groups which appears to have published any type of material reflecting on the social implications of the gospel.

Floyd Mc Clung, Jr. writes in *Nine Worlds to Win* :

"I believe the gospel has two facets: evangelism and practical concern. In our mission, we like to call it the "two-handed" gospel". What I mean by practical concern is becoming aware of specific human needs, then, in collaboration with the poor and needy, seeking solutions to those needs-solutions they can own. I am not talking about paternalism or sympathy; I'm talking about respecting the poor. We must respect them enough to listen to their understanding of their problems and together seek solutions. . .Through this approach we empower the people to take control over their own lives. Poverty is more than just having no money; it is not having the freedom to make choices about one's destiny."⁵¹

In another YWAM book relating principles of personal evangelism we read:

"The fullness of the kingdom of God will not come until Jesus returns, but the church here and now must seek to establish Christ's reign in every area of life. We must be a prophetic voice against evil and injustice. The plight of the poor, and murder of the unborn, for example, should be of serious concern to us who represent the King. We are to be the salt of the earth, as well as the light of the world (Matthew 5.13-14). The presence of the kingdom of God should be a restraining force (salt) against the evil of this world, while, at the same time being a positive force for good (light)."⁵²

YWAM's social convictions have been translated into what it terms "mercy missions", and while the long-term effectiveness of these missions has been questioned, YWAM's underlying conviction is of great theoretical importance.⁵³ That the Church is to have a prophetic voice, that it is to be concerned with "empowering the poor" are radical convictions in the world of neopentecostal Christianity. It appears to be one of the few organisations within the neo/pentecostal tradition which speaks and acts with the conviction that social concerns are an integral, and not a secondary, element of the gospel. One may hope that the example of YWAM may prove catalytic in neo/pentecostal circles.

We suggest that another explanation for the neopentecostals' overall lack of commitment to wider social and political injustices is their belief that society can be improved best by changing the hearts of people-one at the time. In fact, neopentecostals usually offer this explanation when responding to the question of why they have not become more involved in society. Neopentecostals believe that societal conditions will improve as Christianity gains more converts and exerts more

influence in the political realm. A slow, but gradually effective, method to improve the present world order is envisaged by converting and instilling Christian values at the individual level. The founder of Rhema South Africa, Ray McCauley, is quoted by his biographer:

"When we get a person turned on to Jesus, he'll make an impact on society. It's up to Christian individuals to play their part by sharing actively and positively the love of God with their neighbours, whoever they may be. Only the love of God can change people and situations...I believe the urgent need in South Africa today is to preach the gospel of love, peace and reconciliation between man and God and between ourselves. The Cross of Jesus is a great leveller. All barriers are broken when we meet at the foot of the Cross."⁵⁴

The Deeper Life Church presents similar reasoning. In an interview with Isaacson, Ransom Bello, Deeper Life's Kano State Overseer, told him:

"As a church we can change people...People make up society-if we can change people, society will change. For example, we have an outreach to the prison, and many are converted. One boy was sentenced to seventeen years; he was converted through our visiting him and praying with him. He earned his release through good behaviour after only three and a half years. We stand for the truth. We work faithfully and trustworthily. We teach forcefully against bribery and corruption. Our members who are in responsible posts are ensuring honest standards. It may look gradual, but it works...Our membership in Kano City is 4.500-so in many offices and places we are a presence for justice and order."⁵⁵

The "increased presence" argument is also posited by YWAM:

"The educational system needs teachers and students who can uphold righteousness and make a stand against humanism. Countries need politicians who will lead the people of God, implementing his principles of justice and righteousness in secular government. The sports world needs heroes that can point to the King as the source of their strength. The world desperately needs to see Christian marriages and families that represent Christ's love for the church."⁵⁶

These citations all reiterate the fact that neopentecostals are convinced that societal justice will increase with an increased number of Christians in society. The neopentecostal "strategy" for positively affecting the present world order is, not surprisingly, an individualistic one: convert and train people one by one. These converts are then to add to the "light and salt" in society and, thus, make a difference in their communities.

Theoretically, there is great potential for lasting change in the neopentecostal approach to social transformation. Although they live in and are defined by community, individuals are called to repentance and faith one by one. Within the community of faith (e.g. the Church), Christians are exhorted and encouraged to act as Christs in the larger global community. Truly converted individuals within the

faith community are powerful agents of change. As well, the fact that these individuals are Christians should make a visible difference to the social programmes in which they participate, because their involvement is prompted not only by the desire to see improved conditions but by genuine Christ-like compassion for the people involved. Compassion is the kind of motivation that does not end with the project. Therefore, a community of genuinely converted and Christ-like individuals has much potential to effect change in society.

The structural weakness in the neopentecostal strategy for social transformation is in its failure to take seriously enough the power exerted by society, as society, on individuals. More than an amalgamation of individuals, society has its own conscience and anonymity, both of which transcend its individual constituents. For example, in society people tend to do things en masse, such as hurl insults from a vehicle and loot after an earthquake, that they would not do as individuals. Even Christians do such things. For neopentecostals to assert that individual Christians can positively affect society without becoming ensnared by it assumes a high level of Christian maturity and general self-discipline. In reality, only with constant reinforcement are most Christians likely to be actively and intentionally engaged in more than a passive witness to their faith. Without a supportive community of faith, Christians are more likely to be swallowed up by society than transformers of it. We conclude, then, that an affirming community of faith is indispensable to the success of the neopentecostals' social strategy.

Unfortunately, classic pentecostalism has only contributed to neopentecostalism's limited social interpretation of the gospel. Although pentecostals are known for their work with the poorer classes, the Assemblies of God missiologist Pomerville states unabashedly that "it is clear that such solidarity with the poor is not due to overt mission strategy. Pentecostals do not have a concern for social issues."⁵⁷ Pomerville explains later that the main reason the pentecostal movement is associated with the poor is because the poor are, characteristically, the most receptive to the gospel.⁵⁸ Not all pentecostals would go as far as Pomerville in disclaiming any interest in social concerns; but his critique notwithstanding, we do not see much evidence of a pentecostal precedent for a deliberate social interpretation of the gospel message.

The Role of the Church

The New Testament Church is the axiomatic missiological and ecclesiastical paradigm of neopentecostalism.⁵⁹ Its governing principles and methodologies are copied (sometimes too) faithfully in neopentecostal circles. As in the pentecostal tradition, the Acts of the Apostles is at the centre of both the missiological and ecclesiastical paradigms, while the Pauline epistles seem to feature secondarily. Ideally, neopentecostals believe that New Testament missiological methods will lead to the formation of New Testament type churches. A YWAM writer states:

"In relation to evangelism and missions, I believe the church should be like an arrow. At the tip or point of the arrow are the evangelists and the pioneer apostles. The shaft of the arrow consists of prophets, teachers, pastors, and others involved in support ministries. The evangelists and pioneer apostles penetrate new areas with the gospel, while those who make up the shaft of the arrow help in establishing the evangelistic work that has been done. This pattern is found in the book of Acts...The pattern of the New Testament Church is still a pattern to follow today. We need to be releasing teams consisting of evangelists and those with apostolic ministries who can build and establish a church out of the fruit of the evangelism." ⁶⁰

All of our case study groups are actively engaged in evangelism with the goal of church planting. The approximately 1000 Deeper Life congregations across Africa, the additional Rhema centres in Australia and South Africa, and the new commitment of YWAM to plant churches provide us with ample evidence of this fact.⁶¹ Clearly, Bonnke's crusades are a supplementary feature of neopentecostalism's church planting goal.

Believing themselves to be consistent with the New Testament model, neopentecostals view the primary role of the local church as preaching the gospel. The early Church was an action-oriented congregation which soon became many, and its primary occupation was the *proclamation* of the Word of God. The apostles' purpose in proclamation was to "make disciples" and then form these disciples into new congregations. Neopentecostals see proclamation, disciple making, and church planting as *the* on-going tasks of the church. Preserving souls for heaven is understood to be the quintessential task of the church. Bonnke claims that:

"...The church is a lifeboat not a pleasureboat. Entertainers are neither needed nor wanted. From the captain to the cook, all hands are needed on deck for soul-saving. THE CHURCH THAT DOES NOT SEEK THE LOST IS 'LOST' ITSELF. Some excuse themselves saying that in today's pluralistic societies, the Christian half can never penetrate the other half. Was then our situation not anticipated by God? People ask, "What is God saying to the Church today?" Why is that a problem? Does God speak so inaudibly? He says nothing that is not in His Word already. I know one thing God is saying. If our prophets are true they will be voicing the same urgency as Jesus Christ, and echoing the same Great

Commission...Evangelists? They must be reinstated! Thousands are in church jobs to which God never called them...The fact remains forever that God's concern today, as at Calvary, is the salvation of souls...Every single church activity should relate to turning the world back to God." ⁶²

One of the few references to the role of the Church to be found in Rhema literature is a statement made by Hagin, Jr.:

"The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ exists for the salvation of men's souls. The main message is Jesus Christ and Him crucified."⁶³

Hagin, Jr. does not elaborate further on the role of the Church in this text. This statement on the Church is made in the context of a discussion on understanding how the prosperity doctrine works for the individual believer.

In Kumuyi's literature, when the role of the Church is mentioned there is an almost immediate transference to the task of evangelism. It appears that the role of the Church is synonymous with the task of personal evangelism. Chapter two of his book *The Heartbeat of the Almighty* is entitled "Mission of the Church"; it begins:

"(Matthew 28.18-20) The church needs to discover her mission on earth and the place that mission occupies at the very centre of all her plans and programmes, so that she can fulfil her purpose of existence."⁶⁴

Two paragraphs later, we read:

"You must remember what Jesus said in the Gospel according to John Chapter 17 verse 18, 'As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.' This same thing was repeated after His resurrection. In John 20.21 the Bible says, 'Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' If the Christian is to understand his mission on earth, he must understand Christ's mission. First, He sent us into the world for He Himself was sent into the world. Remember, He did not stay in heaven to carry out his mission. He did not stay in heaven brooding over the lost world and contemplating how it could be saved. He actually came...And this is telling us that since our mission resembles His, then, as He came, so we must go to the people who need our attention and tell them the Good News."⁶⁵

We see that in three of our four case studies, the role and purpose of the Church is defined by "proclamation" evangelism. Evangelism's purpose is to lead people to a spiritual salvation which should include bodily healing. As well, underlying all three statements is the assumption that the other tasks of the Church are to remain peripheral to the task of evangelism.

As a parachurch organisation, YWAM usually makes reference to the role of the Church in the context of the mission-church relationship. The tension, and yet the

necessity, of co-operation within this uneasy relationship is discussed by Floyd McClung:

"We need each other. God has created the church both to nurture local believers and to reach out to a lost world. Local churches and missionary movements that share a spirit of mutual accountability and co-operation will be able to participate in one of the greatest thrusts forward in church history."⁶⁶

McClung then goes on to outline five attitudinal and theological adjustments which all Christians need to make "in order to allow the church to be the powerful, united force God intends it to be":

"(1) We must renounce all attitudes of independence and pride. Any attitude that suggests that our group or church does not need the rest of the body of Christ, or makes us feel we are the precursors of the Kingdom of God in and of ourselves, or that we alone are at the centre of what God is doing, is pride...(2) We need to develop a much more positive and dynamic ecclesiology. If our view of the church is too small or exclusive, it will result in ignoring or even denying God's blessing on many structures outside our circle of activity and church life. God is working through local church structures and mission church structures. It is His church and He is building it!...(3) In order to be the united force God wants us to be, both local churches and missionary organizations need to accept their limitations and the complementary relationship God intends the[m] to have with one another. Local churches are best at equipping new believers and nourishing them as they serve as salt and light in society. And missionary organizations know how to train people for cross-cultural service. Accepting our limitations and the dependency we have upon one another allows us to inspire and replenish one another...(4) Local churches must not see the great commission as an addendum to the church program. It must be the church program. It is not an optional extra, but the driving force and central vision of the church...(5) Local churches and missionary organizations should develop well thought-out policies of how they will relate to each other and what they expect of one another...The church that does not make missions its future has no real future..."⁶⁷

The role of the Church is clearly articulated by McClung in a paper on church planting. He states that God:

"...has chosen to reveal Himself through the church. It is His channel of blessing to the world. He is the head over all things-for the church-which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Through the church the manifold wisdom of God is made known...It is essential that we recognize the New Testament does not speak of just winning 'sheep' but also forming them into 'flocks'. In the Bible we are called by various terms: God's people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a living temple, the temple of God-all imply community or belonging to others. Church planting is a fulfilment of God's desire to gather us into kingdom communities. The Bible is not just concerned with individual Christians, but communities of God's people. Churches are not voluntary associations; we are the 'called out ones'."⁶⁸

Of our four groups, YWAM appears to offer the most comprehensive definition of the role of the Church. While it places a high priority on "proclamation evangelism" it does not neglect to speak of the corporate nature and responsibility of the Church. At the same time, this social awareness does not diminish YWAM's

overriding enthusiasm for personal witnessing "at all time and in all places", a passion which it shares with our other case study groups.

What, then, is the neopentecostal interpretation of the primary role of the Church? It is this. The Church is to be an evangelistically prophetic voice echoing the words of the Jesus and apostles who were then, as we are now, charged to call the world to repentance. There is also the further assumption that the convert will then identify with a "full gospel", or, in the case of YWAM even an evangelical, church.

Let us now contrast the neopentecostal and WCC understandings of the role of the Church in the world. In the WCC's 1990 San Antonio Report we read the following description:

"...The churches are to be a sign for the world. They are to intercede as he did, to serve as he did. Thus Christian mission is the action of the body of Christ in the history of humankind-a continuation of Pentecost. Churches are free to choose the ways they consider best to announce the gospel to different people in different circumstances. But these options are never neutral. Every methodology illustrates or betrays the gospel we announce. In all communications of the gospel, power must be subordinated to love."⁶⁹

The WCC's understanding of the Church's role in the world is more comprehensive than that of neopentecostalism. Most of the verbs in this statement are action verbs; the Church is to intercede, to serve, to announce, and to love. Actions such as interceding, serving, and loving are perpetual actions; there is no specific end to such tasks. These verbs imply that the Church is to be involved in the orbicular web of human life. In the WCC statement, salvific urgency appears to be just one important theme among many to which the Church is called to minister. Newbigin notes similarly that:

"The whole life of the church-worship, fellowship, preaching, teaching, service-has a missionary *dimension*, but not all this has a missionary *intention*. When, following the death of Stephen, the Jerusalem church was attacked and dispersed, the scattering of believers produced an enormous missionary expansion (Acts 8), but there was no missionary intention. On the other hand, when, moved by the Spirit, the church in Antioch laid hands on Saul and Barnabas and 'sent them off' to preach among the gentiles, the missionary intention was central. Here is, one may say, the central New Testament paradigm for missions as I have defined them. The Antioch church was itself a witnessing and rapidly growing community (Acts 11. 19-26). It was also a compassionate church, responding generously and promptly to the needs of the hungry (11.27-30). But the Spirit did not allow it to be content with this. It was to set apart and send a team called for the specific purpose of taking the gospel to unreached peoples. This team was and remained a part of the church, but it was set apart with a specific missionary intention...What I do find in the New Testament, and this is very important, is a great variety of forms of ministry. In particular it does seem that the early church acknowledged two forms of ministry: the settled ministry of bishops (elders) and deacons, and the mobile ministry of apostles, prophets, and

evangelists. These are all listed as part of the ministry of the one body, but they have different roles."⁷⁰

In contrast, most neopentecostal references to the role of the Church in the world leave the reader with the impression that once the primary task of evangelism has been carried out (that is, a person has "accepted Christ" and been fully grafted into a local church) the essential role of the church is completed. There is only scant discussion in neopentecostal literature on the on-going tasks of the church. In fairness to neopentecostalism, this lack may be a function of its youthfulness. Nonetheless, one danger of this mono-vision of the Church's role is that people can become mere statistics.⁷¹ The task of fulfilling the Great Commission down to the very last "people group" can itself become more important than the command to "love one's neighbour as oneself".⁷²

Pneumatology

Like pentecostals, neopentecostals fervently believe that their doctrine of pneumatology is the key to their missiological and, hence, ecclesiastical success. For neo/pentecostals baptism in the Holy Spirit is the complete and efficacious means to personal and corporate spiritual victory. Acts 1-2 is the scriptural foundation, the *Magna Charta* of their pneumatologically oriented Christianity. Neo/pentecostals point to Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit's power recorded in Acts 1.5,8:

"...John, as you know, baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and within the next few days...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem, and all over Judea and Samaria, and away to the ends of the earth."

and the fulfilment of this promise recorded in 2.1-4:

"While the day of Pentecost was running its course they were all together in one place, when suddenly there came from the sky a noise like that of a strong driving wind, which filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues like flames of fire, dispersed among them and resting on each one. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them power of utterance."

It is a presupposition in most neo/pentecostal circles that the early Church's experience of Holy Spirit baptism is normative for all Christians. Holy Spirit baptism is integral to the victorious Christian life or church. The baptism is the "secret weapon" in the neo/pentecostal arsenal. Neopentecostals are convinced that their pneumatology is the key to the potency of their missionary enterprises. Except for YWAM, which downplays Holy Spirit baptism because of its evangelical

connections, our case study groups are adamant (for different reasons) about the necessity and efficacy of Holy Spirit baptism.

In Hagin's literature, Holy Spirit baptism is portrayed as a personal blessing for which one may have to seek. There appears to be no reference to the Holy Spirit's empowering for evangelism; instead, we get the impression that Spirit baptism is sought solely for its accompanying personal spiritual gifts. Note the strong tenor of personal control in Hagin's words:

"Believers need to be taught what the Bible says belongs to them. For example, the baptism of the Holy Ghost belongs to every Christian, but believers must be taught that this gift belongs to them. Something can actually belong to you as a believer, but if you don't know it belongs to you, it won't do you any good-it won't profit you because you won't be able to take advantage of it...Find out what the Scriptures have to say on the subject. We don't have any business with something that the Bible doesn't promise us we can have. But on the other hand, God's Word is specific about our redemptive rights. Every believer is entitled to healing, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and anything else the Bible promises us. Remember, it's the Word of God that brings light and illumination to your spirit. So get into the Word of God for yourself so you can receive everything God has for you!" 73

"The believer can be baptized in the Holy Spirit, and speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance..."74

In the writings of both Kumuyi and Bonnke there is an emphasis on the evangelistic benefits, or rather, the evangelistic necessity, of having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Kumuyi writes:

"The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the third work of grace. Normally the evidence for this is praying in a well-articulated language that you have not spoken before. It leads to a deeper prayer life, insight into the word of God, and effectiveness in witness; especially where you have been failing before, people you evangelize will melt by the Spirit's power."75

Bonnke goes beyond Kumuyi, asserting that the anointing, or Spirit baptism, is the power necessary to carry out the Great Commission:

"'How shall they preach, except they be sent?' (Romans 10.15). The Spirit says the same thing. He directs us. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of witness. Witness is His purpose. The Great Commission is linked to the Holy Spirit. When Christ baptises us into the Spirit, He puts into our hands His instructions to take the gospel to the whole world...The Great Commission to the disciples is transferred to each one of us individually today, and it comes with the individual anointing of the Holy Spirit. The command and the power are one package deal...Separate the commission from the enabling, and you then have either power without purpose or purpose without power. Power tools come with the job. Go with bare hands and you will make little progress."76

Little mention of Spirit-baptism is made in YWAM literature. Those references which can be noted are of a non-specific nature; as well, there is no inference that Spirit-baptism is normative for effective evangelism. We read in a book on personal evangelism:

"...The prophet Joel and the apostle Peter both spoke of an army that God would raise up in the last days, and upon whom he would pour out his Spirit. This army would use the dreams of the old and the vision and energy of the young to prophesy, or speak forth God's anointed word, to their generation. To his children of the last days, he promised not only the anointing that comes from being Spirit-filled, but also that they would receive a special anointing to proclaim the gospel in the end-times (Acts 2.17-21)."⁷⁷

We can sum up the views of our case study groups on the role of the Holy Spirit by noting first that both Kumuyi and Bonnke stress the indispensability of the baptism of the Holy Spirit for potent evangelism. To these preachers, Holy Spirit baptism undergirds the successful, powerful ministry. In Hagin's literature, Spirit baptism is only equated with spiritual blessings for the individual believer. In YWAM literature, there are only a few general references to the "anointing" and being "Spirit-filled". Whether or not Spirit baptism is a prerequisite for effective evangelism is not made clear; however, with such non-committal language, YWAM has a better chance of drawing from the widest number of ecclesiastical traditions.

Neopentecostals who advocate that Holy Spirit baptism is essential for effective Christian witnessing point to the historic model of the first Pentecost. Only by the leading and power of the Holy Spirit were the apostles successful in establishing the Church. Assemblies of God missiologist Paul Pomerville writes:

"The Holy Spirit's role in His universal mission is illustrated in Acts by the Pentecostal event and in His breaking through Jewish particularism. The Spirit was the One who opened the door to the expansion of the church among the Gentiles. The Spirit's primary role in His universal mission is demonstrated in the early chapters of Acts. This is especially so in the Spirit's dealing with the Apostle Peter in chapter 10. The Spirit instructed him to make no distinction between Jew and Gentile in the offering of the gospel (Acts 11.11-14). The decisive event that validated the Gentile mission, for both Peter and the early church, was the outpouring of the Spirit in Pentecostal fashion on the uncircumcised Gentiles (Acts 10.44-48; 11.15-17; 15.8-9). After this crucial work of the Spirit in breaking through cultural barriers the mission of the church spread to the Gentile world. The Spirit in each instance was initiating His mission and causing it to expand in ever-widening circles."⁷⁸

Pentecostal tradition also teaches that the missiological success of the first Pentecost can be duplicated. Pentecostals and neopentecostals both believe that the Holy Spirit can and does work in a similarly powerful manner in the present. William McDonald describes pentecostals as:

"...that segment of the body of Christ that ardently proclaims that Pentecost is repeatable, that there were repetitions of Pentecost *mutatis mutandis* within the post-Pentecost biblical history itself, and that a remarkable number of believers in the twentieth century have undergone a similar experience of being clothed with the same robe of heavenly power that mantle the human spirit of Jesus as he carried out his mission in this world."⁷⁹

Why should it matter whether or not Pentecost is a repeatable occurrence? We suspect it matters because the original Pentecost produced power enough for the first followers of Jesus to see thousands of first century people converted to Christianity. This is heady business. Because of its successes, the early Church's evangelistic methods are well worth serious study and imitation. This is, in fact, what those in the pentecostal tradition have advocated over the past one hundred years.

In pentecostal and neopentecostal circles the Holy Spirit is also perceived to be involved in what Grant McClung, Jr. calls supernatural recruitment.⁸⁰ Drawing on New Testament precedents such as the guidance of Phillip in Acts 8, McClung goes on to point out that the early evangelists were recruited in a variety of ways including dreams, visions, prophecy, inner impressions, and the direct word of God.⁸¹ Two other famous examples are Paul's conversion and Peter's recruitment to preach to the non-Jewish population. In similar ways, McClung argues, pentecostal missionaries through the decades have "felt the call of the Lord upon their lives" and been directed to specific countries about which they have had no prior knowledge.⁸² As the biographies of our case study founders reveal, the neopentecostal experience has been practically identical.⁸³

The most commonly voiced theological misgiving concerning neo/pentecostal pneumatology is the movement's tendency to exaggerate the role of the Holy Spirit and to neglect, especially, the role of God the Father. The evangelical Clark Pinnock comments:

"The impression is sometimes given that we ought to engage in two movements of faith, one in Jesus for salvation and one in His Spirit for power. The New Testament, however, contains no command to believe in the Spirit; the simple reason for this is that the Spirit is Christ's and in Christ. Not only does this double faith idea detract from the full sufficiency of Jesus, it also tends in the direction of tritheism."⁸⁴

In defence of the neo/pentecostal tradition, it can be said that its inclination to over-emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit may well be a response to an under-emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in many other ecclesiastical traditions.⁸⁵

Yet, there does not appear to be anything in their literature to suggest that neo/pentecostals interpret their pneumatology as a corrective dose. On the contrary, the researcher of neo/pentecostalism gets the strong impression that non-pentecostal pneumatologies are severely deficient. For example, Pomerville asserts:

"the Pentecostal's orientation corresponds to a theological hiatus in western theological tradition, specifically a *pneumatological hiatus, a silence on the Holy Spirit*."⁸⁶

Pomerville goes on to develop this thesis, suggesting evidence to prove that the neglect of pneumatology has adversely affected the western missionary movement. His evidence for this assertion is the independency movements of the southern hemisphere; "there is no doubt that western Christianity has been chiefly instrumental in the causation of independency movements."⁸⁷

In this example, Pomerville overstates his case. By attributing so much influence to western Christianity, Pomerville ironically reveals the type of ethnocentrism which has, for many years, greatly inhibited the autonomy of the nonwestern church. Certainly, the western church has tacitly encouraged independency in the nonwestern world, but for other reasons than merely its lack of pneumatological emphasis. Personal choice, the opportunity for indigenous leadership and financial control, and lack of contextualisation are some of the other causes of independency movements in the two-thirds world. Also, a heightened, "indigenous" pneumatology has developed *within* the mission churches, despite its western heritage; this fact is easily demonstrated by attending many of the denominational churches in the two-thirds world.⁸⁸

Eschatology

A premillennialist eschatology characterizes neopentecostalism and greatly heightens its sense of urgency in mission. Neopentecostals believe that not only are people dying daily without a knowledge of Christ, but the opportunity to convert more of the world's population will effectively end with Christ's return. Therefore, the gospel must be preached today. While none of our case study groups ventures to know "the hour" of the return of Christ, all four intimate that we live in the "last days". Hagin, Jr. writes:

"Today as never before the prophecies in God's Word are coming alive in our very midst. There are wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes, floods, and famines (Matthew 24.6,7; Luke 21.9-11). All of these events are a part of the last days Jesus talked about in Matthew chapter 24 and Luke chapter 21...Rather than

become discouraged by the problems in the world, this is the time when we are to begin to 'look up, for our redemption draweth nigh' (Luke 21.28). As God's children, we have a Blessed Hope in the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ, our King! Meanwhile, we need to realize we have the *only* answer for a world that is in turmoil. Our answer is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the good news of His saving power...It is time to concentrate on preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God as a witness to all the nations...Until the last lost soul is won for the Kingdom of God, there should be no sitting down and singing, 'Glory, hallelujah! We've gathered *most* of the 'sheep' into God's fold!'"⁸⁹

Bonnke reinforces Hagin, Jr's. words:

"Although Scripture speaks about 'many' who are on their way to eternal destruction (Matthew 7.13), they must be intercepted by men and women preaching the original gospel. Provision has been made to bring 'many sons into glory' (Hebrews 2.10) and Revelation 7.9 speaks of a successful conclusion. . . More people are being saved, healed and baptized into the Holy Spirit today than ever before...The tempo must increase, however. Jesus is coming soon."⁹⁰

A YWAM selection highlights the standard neo/pentecostal reasons for why the world is living in its "last days" and its implication for evangelism:

"The prophet Joel and the apostle Peter both spoke of an army that God would raise up in the last days, and upon whom he would pour out his Spirit. This army would use the dreams of the old and the vision and energy of the young to prophesy, or speak forth God's anointed word, to their generation. To his children of the last days, he promised not only the anointing that comes from being Spirit-filled, but also that they would receive a special anointing to proclaim the gospel in the end-times (Acts 2.17-21). While they may not agree on all the particulars, today many believe we are living in that period known as the last days. Across the body of Christ world-wide is the cry that God is preparing his people for a great thrust of evangelism that will reach to every corner of the earth and usher multitudes into the kingdom of God..."⁹¹

YWAM's founder, Cunningham, even intimates that the return of Christ may be hastened by the preaching of the gospel:

"Faith grows that we can fulfil the Great Commission and usher in the return of the King."⁹²

To emphasize the importance of being involved in personal evangelism now, Kumuyi reminds his readers that:

"The time is far spent. The door is about closing. The trumpet is about sounding. The Lord Jesus Christ who went away long ago and told the people that He was coming again will soon come. The angels are getting ready. And the time is near when 'the dead in Christ shall rise and we which are alive, and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud...' We shall tell the Lord what we did in the days of the flesh."⁹³

We see a unanimity among our case study groups in the belief that the 1990s are the "end times". Only in their renewed commitment to the evangelistic task will

Christians win the maximum number of people for the kingdom of God before "the trumpet shall sound". It is only in Rhema's eschatology that we see the "end times" scenario also being used to encourage Christians that their celestial home is not far off. This appears consonant with the personalized gospel preached by Rhema.

What evidence is cited by neopentecostals to indicate that we are living in the "last days"? Signs and wonders. Today's fulfilled prophecies and healings of all descriptions are seen to be a continuation of the "latter rain" of the Holy Spirit, the event believed by pentecostals and neopentecostals to have occurred at the turn of the twentieth century. This type of spiritual outpouring is understood as that which will precede the Lord's return. Therefore, the return of Christ is seen as imminent. Joel 2:28 is often cited as a biblical prophecy that has been fulfilled, at least partially, since the turn of the century:

"Therefore the day shall come when I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men see visions; I will pour out my Spirit in those days even upon your slaves and slave-girls."

Since the Holy Spirit has been bestowed in such obvious abundance upon the Church in the twentieth century, neopentecostals believe that it is likely that Christ's return will not be long delayed.

Hollenweger, among others, has noted that through this century the expectation of Christ's second coming has declined in many classic pentecostal churches; it is the younger pentecostal type churches which are, once again, stressing the return of Christ.⁹⁴ It is difficult, both theologically and institutionally, to indefinitely maintain a high level of eschatological excitement. The theological difficulty comes from knowing that regardless of the number and types of end-times portents, no one can predict the exact moment.⁹⁵ The institutional difficulty refers to a movement's maturing into a more formal and elaborate structure; its youthful enthusiasm is now tempered with the older concerns like building programs and pensions. At present, three of our four case study groups are "young adults", with plenty of New Testamental eschatological enthusiasm. Rhema functions as the "old man" among them, making relatively few references to the imminent return of Christ.

Contextualisation

Over the last several decades the concept of "contextualisation" or "inculturation" has been a popular theme in missiological circles. The Church has been charged by theologians with the task of presenting the changeless gospel in a *culturally relevant manner* to our rapidly changing world. Alward Shorter defines "inculturation" as:

"...the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures."⁹⁶

How do neopentecostals understand the concept of contextualisation? Neopentecostals may be said to endorse an Augustinian model of contextualisation. From Augustine's assertion that "all souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee", they extract the principle that God alone is the universal panacea for spiritual restlessness. Further, it is only the God of the Christians who fills the void experienced by all humanity. Acting on the presupposition that the gospel is the one thing that all people need (whether they realize that need or not) neopentecostals broadly proclaim their message. They believe that the "simple gospel" is innately culturally relevant; its timeless message of saving power is appropriate "at all times and in all seasons".

This presupposition, that all people need the gospel, is clearly evident in all of our case study groups. We cite two representative examples. The first comes from Bonnke:

"People need victory over sin in their personal lives. They need to feel clean, forgiven. They need to feel less disgusted with themselves...We must major on how to get people out of the mire, how to get them cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus, how to receive assurance and the witness of the Holy Spirit...Deliverance includes divine, miraculous healing. Some have thought healing was an incidental result, a mere attachment to the gospel. Never! It is an ingredient of the message. We preach a whole gospel for the whole man."⁹⁷

The second comes from YWAM's McClung:

"That is what our ministry is about-people...all with individual names and with individual needs. God looks down on the vast crowd...and sees not just a sea of blurred faces, but people He has loving formed. He cares about each one and longs for them to come to know Him personally...He hears the heart cry of each desperate person and grieves over their situation. He is calling the church, you and me, to respond to the needs of individuals...desperate for help and love."⁹⁸

Only one of our case study groups, YWAM, actually discusses the concept of contextualisation in its literature. The organisation appears to encourage diverse

strategies for the sake of maximum effectiveness. Put another way, various evangelistic methods are employed to match potential audiences. This approach contrasts with our other three case studies which do not highlight the issue of contextualisation; they simply use the standard venues of church and arena for their preaching.⁹⁹

Although one cannot posit a conscious contextual genius underlying neopentecostal missiology, one can assert that the movement's missiology is inherently contextual in most of the non-western world. In preaching a gospel that assumes both a dualistic universe that allows no room for chance and a spirit world in which good and evil can be controlled by prayers, neopentecostalism has a natural entree into most non-western cultures. The non-western and neopentecostal worldviews are, in a word, complementary. Ojo comments on the contextual significance of the charismatic movements, including Deeper Life, in Nigeria:

"The emergence of the charismatic movements in Nigeria in the 1970s is a remarkable religious phenomenon. Their rapid growth and success could be attributed to many factors, but the central factor which clearly emerges is that the movements have been presented in a manner acceptable and relevant to Nigerians, and they have been adapted to the situation in Nigeria. The continuous growth of the movements into the 1980s suggests that they are acting as responses to certain areas of need in Christian commitment in Nigeria. The concept of contextualisation is therefore the major key to an understanding of their rapid growth..."¹⁰⁰

Ojo may be crediting Nigeria's charismatic movements with more deliberate contextualisation than is actually the case. While the country's charismatic movements have reflected many of the concerns of the 1970s and 1980s, their intentionality is questionable. The larger neopentecostal movement is characterised by its spontaneity, not its premeditation; therefore, it is more likely that Nigeria's charismatic movements are acting, more than reflecting, upon the gospel which they feel called to share. However, we conclude that, whatever their level of intentionality, Nigeria's charismatic movements, are well suited for that culture.

In claiming that the gospel is inherently contextual and needs only to be preached with "power of the Holy Ghost" to transform people, neopentecostals reflect the pentecostal tradition. The power of the "simple gospel" has been asserted by pentecostals from the first days of the "latter rain". The Assemblies' Melvin Hodges writes:

"It must be remembered...that many of the doctrinal disputes that occupy the attention of Christians in the Western world where Christianity has been established for generations, have little relevance in those areas where the conflict

between truth and error, light and darkness, and the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness is real and sharply defined...In presenting the gospel to people who are bound by fear and burdened by spiritual oppression, the message that brings results is...the simple message of the good news of a living Christ who has power to forgive sins and set captives free through the power of the Holy Spirit. The message the apostles preached will produce the Church in non-Christian lands today."¹⁰¹

Hodges believes that the unadorned apostolic gospel will be as potent an evangelistic force in the twenty-first century as it was in the first. Neopentecostals agree. With such a mindset, neither pentecostals nor neopentecostals are likely to include the concept of contextualisation as a separate item on their evangelistic agendas.

While it is reasonable for neo/pentecostals to assume that the "simple gospel" is inherently contextual in the two-thirds world, it is less reasonable for them to think that their gospel will work as well in the west. In point of fact, neopentecostalism is growing at a less rapid rate in the west than in the two-thirds world. This can be explained, in part, by the fact that when preached in the west, neopentecostalism is in alien territory; scientific rationalism, not the spirit world, undergirds the western worldview. Because of the west's scientific orientation, neopentecostals will need to consider a more deliberate contextualisation process in order to more effectively evangelise it. In reconsidering the west's cultural milieu and contextualising their gospel accordingly, neopentecostals may gain more western adherents.

Concluding Critique

The first observation is that the neopentecostal gospel does not neglect bodily and emotional ills; it appears that, in some circles, an individual does not have to even "receive the faith" to get a healing.¹⁰² A belief in the miraculous as normative for Christianity sets neopentecostalism apart from a number of other church traditions. Apparently, from the testimonies of many people, the neopentecostal gospel *has* 'borne healing on its wings'.

Second, the neopentecostal gospel does not neglect the necessity of material provision. On the basis of scriptures like Philippians 4.19, God is presented as the Ample Provider. Of course, the perilous aspect of this teaching is to mentally intertwine need and want and begin to think that one's needs include a Mercedes. Yet,

the neopentecostal emphasis on this teaching can be seen as a counterbalance to other, overly spiritual interpretations of scriptures relating to material provision.

Thirdly, adherents of the neopentecostal gospel are characterized by their great care for one another. Neopentecostals are known to provide for the needs of their membership. Allan Anderson, a pastor of the (charismatic) Hatfield Christian Church in South Africa comments on the Rhema constituency in that country:

"From my personal observation, I have found people of Rhema churches often amongst the most concerned, compassionate and generous Christians in this country. Far from abandoning their responsibilities towards the poor, these Christians see it as their God-given duty to do what they can to alleviate poverty- and not just through the proclamation of "prosperity", but in practical giving!"¹⁰³

The fact that Anderson writes from a charismatic perspective is likely to affect his observations of a church preaching a similar theology. In fact, Anderson's comment stands almost solo next to the chorus of other critics which have denounced Rhema and Rhema-influenced theology as decidedly too success-oriented and smacking of American-style capitalism.¹⁰⁴ One thing is glaringly obvious. Nowhere in the world does "alleviating poverty" sound more like a Band-Aid (or a plaster) on a gangrenous limb than in South Africa in 1991. We must conclude that the neopentecostal gospel, especially if it promotes wealth, appears a suspiciously abridged version of the gospel.

Perhaps the most succinct and accurate accusation leveled at the neopentecostal gospel is that it is a gospel which promises much and demands little. The movement's literature is full of teachings outlining believer's benefits and strangely devoid of teachings on the cost of discipleship and societal justice. Not surprisingly, the pentecostal movement is criticized for similar reasons. From pentecostal history, we gain a perspective on this loud silence which characterizes both movements:

"A move in the direction of action in the world, however valid it may be from the viewpoint of the Christian revelation, was seen by many as a threat to pentecostal integrity. It could lead Spirit-movement people "down" the same path as the social gospel, social Christianity, and other world-engaging emphases which tended to blur the line between the righteous and the secular. The result could be blurring of the demarcating principle, a loss of identity."¹⁰⁵

This fear of a loss of identity, of the salvific work of Christ being diluted with social issues, is seen in two of our four case study groups. In the preaching ministries of both Bonnke and Kumuyi there is a conspicuous lack of the gospel's social dimension. This same fear of diluting the gospel is a less likely explanation for the lack of social emphasis in Hagin's preaching; instead, we may suspect that

such issues are too demanding and too altruistic as elements of a prosperity gospel.¹⁰⁶ Comparatively, YWAM's gospel has a well-developed social dimension. When talking about the incomplete gospel of "culture Christianity", Rene Padilla could well be referring to the larger neopentecostal movement:

"The Gospel is meant to place the totality of life under the universal lordship of Jesus Christ, not to produce cultic sects; it is an open break with the status quo of the world. Therefore a gospel that leaves untouched our life in the world, in relationship to the world of humanity as well as in relationship to the world of creation, is not the Christian Gospel, but culture Christianity, adjusted to the mood of the day. This kind of gospel has no teeth; it is a gospel that religion consumers will want to buy because it is cheap and it demands nothing of them. The Gospel in the first century was, according to Michael Green, "politically suspect, socially disruptive". The gospel of culture-Christianity today is a message of conformism. A message that, if not accepted, can at least be easily tolerated because it doesn't disturb anybody. The racist can continue to be a racist, the exploiter can continue to be an exploiter. Christianity will be something that runs along life but will not cut through it."¹⁰⁷

Padilla has struck a nerve. There is almost no social teaching in most versions of the neopentecostal gospel; it appears, in many ways, a form of his "culture-Christianity". It is politically palatable and socially soothing. In its extreme forms, the neopentecostal gospel comfortably accommodates culture by its narcissistic preoccupations. William Pannell voices this common critique in an article addressed to American charismatics:

"My...concern is aimed at the historical tendency of reforming and revivalist Christians to see the work of the Spirit in merely individual terms...American culture is built on individualism. It is a society shaped by a Protestant ethic on the one hand, and the fruits of the Enlightenment on the other...one of the keys to that great movement was the release of the individual, even when that was expressed in the words 'We the people...' I hear that emphasis on a more popular level when believers talk about 'my salvation', 'my healing', or when others in the evangelical camp speak of evangelism as 'personal'. I know what is meant in all these instances. I have expressed similar words in giving my personal testimony. I also know how that perception of what God does for us personally can be translated into a mindset that sees God as being primarily interested in individuals and their personal well-being. It then becomes a Christian version of 'me-ism'...But utilitarian individualism needs a corrective... People are usually part of human networks, societies, tribes if you will. Their personal destinies are tied up with others in these networks. And it is within these networks that issues are formed impinging on their welfare: issues such as injustice, the ultimate enemy of peace and reconciliation. A failure on the part of Spirit-filled believers to address themselves to such injustice would be to abandon much of humankind to the forces of evil in its varied forms..."¹⁰⁸

That community, and not isolation, is the human norm is a key to understanding the shortcomings of the neopentecostal gospel. People live in community; they cannot be a part of the Church without sharing in the community of faith. As members of the Church, individuals in community are called to represent Christ in the world.

Further, as members of the global community, Christians are called to love all people, not just other Christians. When it refuses, or is reluctant, to expand the term neighbour to include all those people beyond its communion, the neopentecostal movement falls short of the "full gospel".

We conclude with the observation that, with the exception of the YWAM organisation and Deeper Life's stress on the evangelistic task, the missiology of our case studies is primarily focused on illuminating the benefits, but not the responsibilities, of the Christian gospel.¹⁰⁹ Generally, neopentecostal missiology is more concerned with the personal and miraculous than with the community and mundane. This has resulted in an incomplete and slanted, but quite popular, version of the gospel. How each case study group presents the balance of the gospel's benefits and duties is detailed in Chapter Eight.

What are the driving forces behind a neopentecostal theology of mission? In the next chapter we continue our examination of neopentecostal missiology by looking at its aims, goals, and motivations.

Chapter Four

THEOLOGY OF MISSION: AIMS, GOALS, AND MOTIVATIONS

"As Christians, as the Church, we must know what we want, for ourselves, for other human beings, for the world. It is not enough to know what we know. We cannot afford theories which are irrelevant to practice or formulations of the Christian message which have nothing to do with human life. We must learn to do the truth, to translate our programs into action...And what is this message? What is it that holds the twenty seven books of the New Testament together? What is the thread of unity which runs through twenty centuries of Christian history and preaching? It is Jesus Christ..."

Hans Kung, 1974¹

Aims and Goals

In their genuine dedication to world evangelisation, neopentecostals have demonstrated that they know what they want. Like other Christian traditions which understand the Great Commission as a mandate yet to be fulfilled, neopentecostals are characterized by their zealous evangelistic activity. What are the temporal and long term goals of the neopentecostal missionary endeavour? To what ultimate end does it strive?

All of our case study groups except Rhema make continual reference to the task of world evangelisation. Themes relating to the ultimate aim of these three groups can be discerned in the following citations. The first comes from Bonnke:

"I am come that they might have life, *and that they might have it more abundantly*' (John 10.10). The apostle Peter could write, 'Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied' (1 Peter 1.2). Abundance is at the very heart of the gospel. That is why we must preach this glorious gospel. Think of the many reversals the Saviour causes. Jesus Christ turns loss into gain, ciphers into numbers, negatives into positives, night into light, hate into love, bondage into freedom, failure into success, sickness into health, weakness into strength, evil into righteousness and more-so much more. What a gospel! Praise be to God. . .It is the greatest work on earth to preach the good news, and the need for the gospel is the greatest need in the world."²

Floyd McClung begins a YWAM book with these words:

"This book is born out of...renewed zeal for world missions. It is a call to action. It is a presentation of the challenge before every Christian in relation to missions and evangelism...Much has been done in missions and evangelism over the last 2000 years, but, as we shall see, much remains to be done. Yet, at no other point in church history have we had the resources and wherewithal to see the job completed. Advances in technology, mission strategies, and numbers of people involved have put completion of the great commission within reach. Only one

thing is keeping us from completing the great commission: total dedication to the task...There is much that is being done in missions around the world, but it is not enough just to preach the gospel. We must leave some living witness to the power of Jesus Christ in every community where we preach, and that living witness is a thriving, evangelizing church-a church that can carry on with the task of winning the lost and discipling them."³

Kumuyi echoes Bonnke and McClung:

"...He commanded: 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'. Here he emphasised that every nation must be reached through the preaching of the gospel; 'all nations', every territorial boundary or every national boundary must hear the proclamation of the gospel, the good news that Jesus died to save the lost...In the Acts of the Apostles chapter 1 Verses 8-9: 'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth'...This was the last word of the Lord. It was the final commandment that came from the Lord. It was certainly the most important word. This word which Jesus repeated over and over must be the nucleus of every believer's life...Always remember it. You have a ministry here on earth: it is to preach the gospel to every creature in your community."⁴

In contrast to these three groups which highlight an ultimate aim of winning the world for the kingdom of heaven, Hagin highlights a different ultimate aim. Repeatedly in Rhema's teachings, Christians are challenged by the call to claim what is theirs in Christ, or "to reign as kings in daily life". Hagin writes:

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ' (Romans 5.17). You could read that verse like this: "For if by Adam's offence spiritual death (which is the nature of Satan; which is hatred, lying, poverty, sickness) reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." The *Amplified* translation, and several others, translate that, "*reign as kings in life* ." What are we to reign over? Circumstances, disease, sickness, sin, hatred-and anything else that is of the devil. These things will not dominate us. We will dominate them. That's what it means to reign in life. . . Too often Spirit-filled Christians are ruled and dominated by the devil, circumstances, and everything else of this world. They ought to be happy and joyous, filled with life and light. Let's rise up and take advantage of what belongs to us. How is it that we're going to reign? By Christ Jesus! I think you could say it this way: We are to reign by the Name Jesus Christ. For He gave us His Name saying, "In my Name, they shall cast out demons."⁵

There is slightly more evidence in Hagin Jr's writings of the historically evangelical emphasis on world evangelisation. In his writings, but rarely in his father's, we find reference to the "challenging mandate of world evangelisation". While these references are not plentiful nor terribly specific, they are references. In a recent issue of *The Word of Faith* Hagin, Jr. writes:

"...Every believer should have God's Word burning within his heart. Every believer should always be ready to preach its life-giving message to those who

need to hear it. We are a people who have been given a challenge, for Jesus said, '...GO ye into all the world, and PREACH THE GOSPEL to every creature' (Mark 16.15). We have a mandate from Jesus himself! We cannot be moved or affected by what we see or hear that's going on in the world around us. Our challenge is to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world!"⁶

That Hagin, Jr.'s writings include topics beyond believers' benefits may be quite deliberate. By promoting evangelism through Hagin, Jr., Rhema may appear to have restored some of the theological balance lost by its heavy emphasis on a prosperity gospel. This may be an attempt to boost Rhema's credibility in larger pentecostal and evangelical circles.

From the statements above which describe the ultimate aim of the neopentecostal missionary movement we propose the following summary of the neopentecostal ideal:

The neopentecostal ideal is that state of the world in which every individual alive at a particular point in history will have responded positively to the "full-gospel" as defined by the neo/pentecostal traditions. As full-gospel Christians, people will continue to live "victoriously in the Spirit".

We propose, as well, the following summary of the temporal ideal of the neopentecostal missionary movement:

The temporal neopentecostal ideal is that state of the world in which every "full-gospel" believer realizes soundness of body, mind, finances, and relationships.

Motivations

Clearly, a variety of motivations prompt all spiritual enterprises. Because of this fact, we will examine the topic of motivations under two categories: those of the spiritual and those of the material. First, the spiritual.

Spiritual Motivations

Love and compassion for the "millions who have never really heard the gospel message" permeates much of the neopentecostal literature. The most prolific mention of love and compassion as motivators for mission comes from Bonnke and Kumuyi. Bonnke writes:

"Evangelism is summed up in this- it is GOD LOVING US THROUGH HIS GOSPEL. Every message preached should be winged with love...Impassioned men and

women through the ages have lived and died to preach Christ and His salvation to all tribes and nations. From the same divine force, the finest works of men have come: churches, charities, hospitals, orphanages, civilisation itself. The love of God in a man's soul is 100 times finer than every motive that has ever driven him."⁷

Kumuyi's exhortation is similar:

"When you know the value of a soul, you will know there is no trouble too great for the sake of saving it. No humiliation too deep! No suffering that is too severe! No love that is too strong! No labour that is too hard! No price that is too high for a soul winner to pay and recover a drowning sinner. This is certainly why Jesus said, 'what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul'...If you have the mind of Christ, if you have the love of God, if you know the value of a soul, you will have compassion in your heart toward the people who are lost. The compassion of Christ is captured in the following scripture. 'But when He saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd' (Matthew 9.36). God also has compassion for the sinful, lonely and the lost. 'But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth' (Psalm 86.15). And God expects every believer to have compassion too. If you have ever studied the Bible and known what the Bible says about hell fire, you will have compassion..."⁸

By contrast, there are only scattered references to compassion in the literature of YWAM and Rhema. One of YWAM's few references to the state of humanity is made by Lehmann:

"One of the most tragic phrases uttered in the Bible is found in Psalm 142.4 where the Psalmist declares '...no man is concerned for me.' This question should be on the lips of every potential evangelist-DO I CARE? Do I care about, and love, those who are dying every day without Christ?...Both Jesus and Paul told us that love should be the bottom line of everything we do in the Christian life, and this is nowhere more true than when it comes to evangelism."⁹

The Rhema reference comes from Hagin, Jr.:

"...We must be ready, like the man in Luke chapter 15, to go out into the spiritual darkness of this world with the light of God's Word and look for one lost soul. And when we find someone who is spiritually lost, we need to care enough to try to lead him into the Kingdom of God. We have the *only* answer for hurting people in this world today-Jesus Christ..."¹⁰

Different reasons explain the relative silence of YWAM and Rhema on love and compassion as spiritual motivators for mission. YWAM's silence might be explained by its consuming desire to "complete the task" of world evangelisation. In a plan which calls for the world to be carved into sections and its peoples lumped into different worlds, it is possible to neglect the personal, compassionate aspect of the gospel.¹¹ Rhema's silence can be explained by its theology. It is first and foremost a theology of the individual; compassion for the world is subsumed under the concern for believer's benefits.

Obedience is a second spiritual motivation for neopentecostal mission. As a motivator for mission, obedience appears more frequently in neopentecostal literature than any other factor, including love. Centuries of Christians have responded to "commissioning" scriptures such as Matthew 28.18-20, Acts 1.8, and Luke 24.45-49 in terms of obedience.

Among our case study groups there is unanimity in the belief that obedience to the Great Commission is a prime motivation for mission. As we might expect, Rhema is the most sparing in its references to obedience and the Great Commission. Hagin, Jr. does write:

"...if we want to serve God and walk in fellowship with Him, we cannot disobey His Word. And in His Word, Jesus commanded every Christian-not just ministers-to go into the world to be a witness for Him (Mark 16.15)."¹²

From YWAM we read of the commission in characteristic battle language:

"Just as in any army, success in battle depends on the obedience of each individual soldier to the orders of the commander-in-chief, so in God's army we must be willing and ready to obey those orders that come down to us from our commander-in-chief. Indeed, he has already issued his command- GO!"¹³

Kumuyi uses a text beyond the usual "commissioning" ones:

"And He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men' (Matthew 4.19). When Jesus called the disciples, He did not say, 'I will make you great men, kings, governors, politicians or first class people'. He promised to make them 'fishers of men'. The Lord has commanded us to evangelise. And if we do not obey, we are committing sin and living rebellious lives. Immediately you are born again, your light must shine in the world. It must not be hidden. You must evangelise."¹⁴

Finally, from Bonnke, we read:

"That divine command was not given in a passing mood of the Lord. God Himself is driven by the peril in which human beings stand without Christ. Calvary was His imperative. 'Other sheep I have...them also I must bring' (John 10.16)...The God who went to the lengths of the cross did not do so to give us a hobby or an interest for our leisure time. Our Lord did not die to provide a minor occupation for a few church folk. He commands us to preach the gospel to every creature. This task *needs* us all."¹⁵

In these citations we see the same point, the necessity of Christian obedience to the Great Commission, expressed in a very similar manner. It is one of the few points upon which all four of our case study groups agree. That obedience as a motive for mission is a common feature of both the pentecostal and evangelical traditions largely accounts for such unanimity.

In citing their obedience to the Great Commission as a motivation for mission, neopentecostals reflect the mainstream of both historical and contemporary (especially evangelical) Protestantism. In his book, *Pentecost and Missions*, Boer notes that obedience as a mission motivator has been a common theme in Protestant missionary literature since the days of William Carey and his *Enquiry* :

"Once the eyes of the Church were opened to her missionary duty the command of Christ around which Carey had so effectively centred his appeal became the basis on which the missionary witness of the Church was consciously built. There is little doubt that the historical and theological background out of which Carey's emphasis on the Great Commission arose was soon lost to sight. The emphasis alone remained, working powerfully in its own right. This is evident in many of the leading figures and movements that have carried the gospel witness to the far ends of the earth...When Adoniram Judson was asked whether he was moved to his missionary labours by faith or by love he replied that it was neither, rather that it was the missionary command of Christ that had come directly into his heart and with it the decision to obey this command, whatever might happen. Robert Morrison (China), William Ellis (Madagascar and the South Seas), and W. G. Lawes (New Guinea) were similarly motivated to their great missionary service...In Europe it was not different. Gustav Warneck, in introducing his own understanding of the theological foundations of missions, reflected the reigning conception when he wrote, 'Why do we do mission work? The shortest and most popular answer is: Because Jesus Christ has commanded it.'"¹⁶

That obedience to the Great Commission remains a primary motivator for mission activity in the contemporary evangelical, fundamentalist, and pentecostal traditions is readily demonstrated by looking at their various missionary declarations. In these traditions, the Great Commission is understood chiefly as a command issued by Christ himself. A scan through their missiological declarations and literature provides ample proof that this is the case.¹⁷

Yet, there are several difficulties with promoting obedience to Matthew 28 as a primary motivation for mission. The controversial visionary Roland Allen (1868-1947), whose works have profoundly influenced pentecostal and other renewal theologies, believed that to interpret the Great Commission as an external command to be obeyed was to misconstrue its very essence.¹⁸ In his 1913 book, *Missionary Principles*, Allen writes:

"Because the missionary command is a command of the Gospel not of the Law, it would appear to be a mistake to speak of the missionary work of the Church as a duty based upon a command, or of the evangelisation of the world as an obligation laid upon the Church by her Lord, as though this duty or obligation in any sense depended upon any particular word of the Lord. In that case, if it were ever possible that it could be shown that the Lord gave no such command, or if Christians began to seriously doubt whether He ever used this or that particular form of words, then the obligation and the duty would perish with the letter of the command. But that is absurd. It would be far more true to say that had the Lord not given any such command, had the Scriptures never contained such a form of words, or could Christians blot it out from their Bibles and from their memories, the

obligation to preach the Gospel to all nations would not have been diminished by a single iota. For the obligation depends not upon the letter, but upon the Spirit of Christ; not upon what He orders, but upon what He is, and the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of Divine love and compassion and desire for souls astray from God. The command appeals to the Spirit. But to turn from the Spirit and to appeal to the command, is to transpose the whole order and meaning of the Gospel. It is to appeal to the dead for life, to expect from an external command the virtue of an internal motive. It is to misuse the word of the Lord."¹⁹

Allen then goes on to describe the basis for authentic missionary motivation:

"Missionary zeal is grounded in the nature and character of the Holy Ghost. It begins with an act of reception. When men open their hearts to Christ and He enters in to dwell there, then enters the spirit of missionary zeal. Missionary zeal is a form of charity; and charity is not a gift of the Spirit which one may have, another not have...For if the Spirit of Christ is in the soul, the moment the existence of men without Christ is revealed to the soul, that moment the Spirit of Christ bursts forth in compassion and desire for them. But where the absence of missionary zeal is due not to this ignorance, but to a restraint of the Spirit of Christ, there is needed not merely information, but spiritual renewal..."²⁰

But, pragmatically, does it truly make a difference whether it is compassion or obedience that acts as the primary motivator for mission? Indeed it does. Historically, the Protestant precedent (at least in its literature) for sharing the gospel has involved more of an *obedience* to completing a task than it has been the *privilege* of sharing God's love. An inherent risk in motivating people with obedience is that the task can be overly quantified and people can become mere naked souls, needing only, in the eyes of the beholder, to be wrapped in the cloak of salvation. This is not the impression we get of Jesus during his three years of ministry. Although the purpose of Jesus' ministry was "to do the will of My Father who sent Me", his was a ministry clearly marked by a deep compassion for people.

Material Motivations

Since there is, arguably, no absolutely altruistic act we must consider the material motivations behind the neopentecostal missionary endeavor. The most visible material motivation in neopentecostalism is the promise of physical well being. Physical well being is promised by all four of our case study groups, although its extent and intensity varies with the group. The most transparent of our sources is Rhema. Hagin, Jr. writes:

"God is giving dreams and visions to pastors and others all over the world. We in the charismatic movement must realize that God is giving people these dreams and visions for one purpose only: to snatch mankind from the hands of the enemy-from the very fires of hell itself! Millions and millions of people are chained with the chains of sin-sickness, poverty, disease-yet all we charismatics do is talk about believing for another expensive car, house, etc. This faith message we

preach is not a get-rich-quick scheme. I believe in prosperity as much as anyone else, and I believe the Word of God teaches it, but the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ does not exist for you to live in fine houses, wear fine clothes, and drive fine automobiles. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ exists for the salvation of men's souls. The main message is Jesus Christ and Him crucified. All of these other things, such as prosperity, are fringe benefits of the Word and power of God. Do you want to know how to have all of these benefits? Get out and start winning souls. Set people free from the devil's bondage. You'll find you can't keep success from falling on you. God will see to it if you'll take care of His business first."²¹

It is not unusual for Christians to believe that when they have acted out of obedience or love for the sake of God's kingdom that divine favor will be bestowed in either the form of personal bonuses or "heavenly jewels". It is quite unusual, though, to challenge a congregation to act as Christ's ambassadors *because* there are immediate, tangible rewards. Is it for the sake of upgrading a Ford to a BMW that we start a Bible study in our neighbourhood?

Hagin's notion of conditional evangelism is not paralleled in our other three groups. Even though Kumuyi and Bonnke teach that the miraculous, even prosperity, is normative for the Christian life, neither goes as far as Hagin in suggesting that Christians should engage in evangelism for the sake of gaining material rewards. Instead, these men stress that obedience to the Great Commission is for the sake of love, both for Christ and "the lost". As a mission, YWAM does not emphasise a gospel of prosperity; as well, its literature does not appear to suggest that Christians be motivated to evangelise for material benefits.

Political Motivations

Neopentecostal Christianity is often suspected of having political motivations for preaching its gospel. Of our case study groups, Rhema and Christ for All Nations come under the heaviest fire when the discussion of motivations turns to the political realm. Some concern about YWAM's political conservatism affecting its missionary activity has also been raised, particularly in Latin America. Only Deeper Life appears to remain unscathed in this respect.

That Rhema and Christ for All Nations may have political reasons for where they minister is a possibility raised and accusation leveled by a number of critics. More specifically, both groups have been charged with being particularly sympathetic to the present South African government.²² Bonnke's personal audiences with the King of Swaziland, the President of Venda and the Paramount Chief

of the Transkei, all perceived as "Pretorian puppets" by most black South Africans, have been criticized.²³ As recently as 1986, the American flag flew alongside the South African flag at the Rhema headquarters outside Johannesburg, a visible display of its empathy with Rhema-USA and the South African government. In *The Evangelical Witness in South Africa* we read:

"The most blatant symbol of support for apartheid South Africa and American values is that of the two flags which are hoisted at the Rhema Centre in Randburg, Johannesburg...This shows the degree of insensitivity of evangelical groups and their ignorance about the attitudes of most blacks in the townships...The fact of the matter is that the flag of America symbolizes 'enemy number one' in the minds of most blacks...whilst that of South Africa is an insult to their humanity and dignity."²⁴

The most stinging criticism leveled at both Rhema and Bonnke, though, concerns their claim to be apolitical. Officially, Rhema and Christ for All Nations declare themselves to be apolitical; to be involved in the affairs of the state is considered unnecessary. In a biography of Ray McCauley, the man who started the Rhema ministry in South Africa, we read:

"The Rhema church is achieving racial harmony between Afrikaans and English speakers, Black and White, without getting involved in politics. Ray has never made any public statements on political issues. Like the majority of enlightened church leaders he agrees that apartheid is an ungodly and unjust system which has brought much pain and misery to the Black people of South Africa. He has not become a political crusader. Instead he has pursued what God has called him to do- preach the gospel. It has been through the power of the gospel that Ray has demonstrated the most effective and practical way of breaking down racial barriers, dissolving suspicion, hate, bitterness and prejudice. Anyone paying a visit to the Rhema church is immediately struck by the warm openness of the people, Black and White..."²⁵

In one of McCauley's books we read:

"There are so many philosophies and even religions that do not follow God's laws. For instance 'Liberation Theology says that sin is in the system but has nothing to do with the sinful nature of man, only to do with the **system** or ruling structures. I ask you, HOW can we possibly do away with a sinful system until the sinful nature of the people organising that system has been done away with? You cannot take sin out of a system until you have dealt with a heart of a sinful nature. The devil is doing and saying certain things, attempting to get us off track into areas that will not produce the solution. If you are a sinner you have not got the ability to walk in love with another. If you overthrow a system with violence then you yourselves will be overthrown by violence for violence produces violence. What you sow is just what you will reap. You will produce after your own kind. It is not a matter of who is right and who is wrong but it is a matter of finding out what GOD SAYS and His solution to the problems. There is no way that people can walk in love and behave like Christians unless they accept the plan of redemption. Unless they accept what Jesus Christ did for them on the cross they cannot be reconciled to God. This must be the very first step...When the Christ in you and the Christ in me come together and meet, there will be no problem with colour or racial backgrounds,

there will be no problem with culture...Until you are reconciled to God there can be no reconciliation either within nations or amongst families..."²⁶

In a Bonnke biography, we read one of his stock phrases when prompted to discuss politics:

"I am not part of the problem-I am part of the solution. I am an ambassador for Jesus and not for any country."²⁷

Rhema and Bonnke's apoliticism can be understood as obedience to a scripture like Romans 13.1-2 which states:

"Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There is no authority but by act of God, and the existing authorities are instituted by him; consequently anyone who rebels against authority is resisting a divine institution, and those who so resist have themselves to thank for the punishment they will receive."

In fact, a report on the 1990 Jinja, Uganda Bonnke crusade makes reference to this scripture when Bonnke was told by a local police officer to stop preaching:

"Knowing, indeed, that according to Romans 13 the ruling authorities that exist are appointed by God, Reinhard Bonnke left the platform and shook the dust of Jinja from his shoes. He was acting according to Jesus' instructions in Matthew 10.14..."²⁸

Such apoliticism can also be understood practically. If these ministers do not criticise the government or its policies, they are less likely to be harassed by the police. Unharassed, Bonnke and McCauley are then free to carry on with preaching their gospel.

The difficulty with such an apolitical posture, especially in South Africa in 1991, is that one can never be truly neutral. In the same way in which these men would tell an audience that to not decide about the person and claims of Jesus Christ is to decide *against* him, for these men to declare their ministries apolitical is tantamount to taking sides with the oppressor. Even if Bonnke and McCauley do not perceive their apoliticism in this manner, the vast majority of black, and many white, South Africans do see apoliticism as, at the very least, a tacit approval of apartheid. In his book *The Religious Right in Southern Africa* Paul Gifford writes:

"This Christianity of Rhema and Christ for All Nations and of the revival they represent at best unconsciously acquiesces in the present system, diverting attention from its inherent injustices. At worst, it is deliberately used to perpetuate the privilege of those who benefit from the present system...Whether by providing theological justification for the Afrikaner state, or by privatizing Christianity so that it leaves the state unchallenged, the aim is to preserve the

status quo, to use Christianity to preserve the privilege of those who have, and to thwart the aspirations of those who have not. Both approaches can be found among government spokesmen, both approaches can be found in the right-wing churches which consciously or unconsciously support the government..."²⁹

In maintaining their apolitical attitude in so obviously an oppressive society like South Africa, Christ for All Nations and Rhema are also ignoring the Church's larger prophetic role in society. The Church is to be the haven of righteousness and the community of the righteous. While its voice may be stifled or even extinguished, the Church is obligated as the community of Christ to represent and call for justice. That to which Rhema and Christ for All Nations feel called, namely to preach an apolitical gospel, has already been challenged by most of their ecclesiastical peers; in time, such a gospel may also be nullified by the realities of the wider environment.³⁰

The Rhema version of the prosperity gospel must be viewed as particularly vile in a country so boldly and legally characterised by the "haves" and the "have nots". If we apply the prosperity message as we understand it, not only does it not challenge the existing order, it *sanctifies* the material possessions of the "haves". We can imagine, too, the Christian "have nots" being taught from Scripture to exercise more faith to erase their slate of poverty. Yet, we are reminded that the size of the Rhema congregation near Johannesburg is about 10,000 and is one of the most interracial assemblies in South Africa. So, adherence to the prosperity message is not an exclusively white phenomenon; in fact, the black "haves" also can be comforted in their prosperity. We can certainly surmise that whatever the Rhema congregation believes, it is not known as a fellowship of Christians which actively defies the existing order.

The neutrality claimed by Rhema and Bonnke in South Africa appears consistent with their abridged perception of the social implications of the gospel. In their imitation of the priorities and messages of Jesus' earthly ministry, neopentecostals see little need for their gospel to contain social responsibility. Yes, situations may be unjust, but temporal injustice is no match for eternal flames. The priority of the neopentecostal gospel is first, and at times exclusively, a personal, spiritual salvation.

Suspicion, more than accusation, best describes the critique concerning YWAM's political motives in Latin America. Although it is known to have some ties with America's religious right, YWAM, like Rhema and Christ for All Nations,

assumes an apolitical posture. Researcher David Stoll has described the influence that the religious right exercises on the Latin American mission movement by the analogy of a series of concentric circles. Of the five rings described by Stoll, the first ring is characterised by those groups which have promoted the American-backed contra war in Nicaragua and the fifth ring as those groups that are most likely to oppose the religious right. In this analogy, Stoll sees YWAM in the third ring; this ring is characterised by agencies that:

"...like the first two, have definite ties to the religious right and supported the Reagan administration's policies in Central America, but were less likely to identify explicitly with the cause, labouring instead to maintain an apolitical front".³¹

We conclude that neopentecostalism is characterised by its political conservatism, particularly those groups which have connections with the United States. Although the movement masks its conservatism behind the guise of apoliticism, its tacit support of conservative governments has been exposed by other Christians as well as researchers.³² It may well serve neopentecostal groups to become as transparent in their political biases as most liberal Christian groups are in theirs, such as when they express open support of the resistance movements in Latin America. In doing so neopentecostals will, at least, be characterised by the truth and not shades of it.

Conclusion

With the exception of Rhema, all of our case study groups are clearly committed to the goal of Christianising the world as rapidly as possible. For Christians, there is to be no higher priority than "to win our generation for Christ". In sum, neopentecostalism's ultimate aim is to convert all humanity to a "full gospel" Christianity.

Neopentecostals believe that the goal of world evangelisation requires the involvement of every believer in the evangelistic task. Gratitude to Christ as well as compassion and love for the non-Christian world are cited by neopentecostals as reasons for engaging in such an endeavour. There is also evidence to suggest that there are political motivators for Rhema and Christ for All Nations' involvement in South Africa. The evidence for YWAM's political motives in Latin America is not as well documented. Certainly, the apoliticism of all three groups can be understood as serving the neopentecostal end of world evangelisation.

The aims, goals and motivation of Rhema's missiology require a separate summary. While there is scattered reference to the importance of world evangelisation in the writings of Hagin, Jr. (as compared to Hagin, Sr.), the goal and ultimate aim of Rhema's world-wide ministry seems firmly fixed on seeing that Christians receive all the benefits "due them" as believers. While there is a cursory mention of love and compassion as motivators for mission, the promise of material blessings is highlighted as an important motive for engaging in evangelism. In this suggestion, Rhema stands alone among our case study groups.

We turn now to the topic of our next chapter, methodology. The where, how, and who of neopentecostal missiology are the focus of Chapter Five.

Chapter Five

Strategies of Mission

In the previous two chapters our discussion of the theology of neopentecostal mission has been concerned with the questions, "What is mission?" and "Why do mission?" In this chapter we consider neopentecostal missionary praxis, attempting to gain additional insight into the movement by considering the "where", "how", and "who" of neopentecostal missiology. We begin with the question of where to do mission.

The "Where" of Mission

From its spontaneous combustion at the turn of the century, to its strategy-planning at the end of the century, the neo/pentecostal movement has been consistently characterized by its geographic expansion. In the earliest years of the pentecostal movement, geographic strategies were determined primarily by the prompting of the Holy Spirit; it was the Spirit which led people to serve as missionaries in particular countries.¹ The guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit continues to play a dominant role in the mission activity of neo/pentecostals, but there is also an increasing regard for less ethereal factors, such as knowledge of global geography, demography, and cultures.

Although it has spread world-wide, the neopentecostal missionary movement can be viewed as both a cross-cultural and mono-cultural phenomenon. Our two case-study churches, Deeper Life and Rhema, represent the more homogeneous approach to geographic expansion. Both churches have grown within predominantly black and white societies, respectively.² Although both churches have successfully crossed geographical boundaries, neither church has yet fully bridged the colour barrier in its expansion. Rhema has established itself on three continents: North America, Africa, and Australia, while Deeper Life has established itself in many African countries as well Great Britain, the United States, and Korea. In crossing the Atlantic, both churches reveal that they expect to gain converts in foreign cultures. At this writing, however, the majority of Rhema's and Deeper Life's world-wide constituency is white and black, respectively.

Several explanations can be suggested for the largely racial uniformity of Rhema and Deeper Life. The first and most evident explanation is simply geography. Churches begin evangelistic endeavours in their immediate areas, and usually one racial group is predominant in a neighbourhood. The perceptions individuals have of the parent congregation provide us with another clue to ecclesiastical racial uniformity; if it was started in the United States, then it

is more likely to be white and capitalist in its values; if started in Africa it is more likely to be black and socialistic. Personal biases, regardless of the truth, too often prevent integration. Another explanation for the homogeneity of the two churches is their relative youthfulness; it clearly takes time for any group of churches to grow into a multi-racial confession.

The cross-cultural dimension of the neopentecostal missionary movement is represented by YWAM and Bonnke. Intentionality sums up their approach: the entire world must clearly hear the "simple gospel". This intentionality is especially evident in the missiology of YWAM which uses existing research and hypotheses in developing its geographic strategies. For example, in literature written by Cunningham and McClung, we come across the evangelical worldviews of American professors Ralph Winter and Peter Wagner as well as the British researchers Patrick Johnstone and David Barrett.³ These four men form the backbone of contemporary evangelical missiology and their ideas permeate much of YWAM's writings on strategy.

We now focus more precisely on the determining factors for the geographical priorities of our two cross-cultural case study groups. We begin with the simplest case, Reinhard Bonnke. We remember from his biography that from an early age Bonnke had felt a spiritual tug toward the continent of Africa. It was later, as a missionary in Lesotho, that Bonnke's calling was vividly brought to life in a dream that "Africa shall be saved". From this year forward Bonnke articulated his vision as "preaching Christ from Cape to Cairo". A further reason for Bonnke's all-consuming zeal for African evangelism is tied up in his belief that Africa is ripe for a spiritual harvest; this abundant harvest may well pass to another continent at any moment, a factor which, in Bonnke's mind, highlights the importance the present moment.⁴ He remarks in a 1990 newsletter:

"What we are seeing God do today in Africa is breathtaking. Following the footsteps of giants, we reap where they had sown in tears. We came to Bukavu, first visited by C. T. Studd, still remote in the rain-forests of Zaire. There we saw 70,000 people respond to the call of God's love. David Livingstone prophesied that where he saw hardly a convert, later there would be thousands. So it was. At Blantyre, Malawi, named after the town in Scotland where Livingstone was born, several hundred thousand responded to the call of salvation."⁵

A comment on a 1990 crusade in Zaire reveals a bit more of Bonnke's geographic agenda:

"Although Butembo is a relatively small town in Africa, (pop. 94,000) our Gospel crusade there was a part of the strategy given us by the Holy Spirit. We no longer aim for towns or cities, but regions and nations. The more systematically this is done, the greater the dynamism and momentum. We saw how God turned Butembo into a spiritual landmark of His Divine strategy and are greatly encouraged."⁶

We conclude that Bonnke's geographical priorities are fixed on Africa due to his "personal calling" and because he believes that Africa is currently a spiritually receptive continent.

The geographical priorities of YWAM greatly reflect the geographical agendas of the evangelical, fundamentalist and pentecostal traditions; this is clear by the way in which Cunningham and other YWAM writers use the other traditions' missiological vocabulary. Simply stated, this common agenda is first, to evangelize the "unreached people groups" of the most densely populated twenty or so cities in the non-western world, and second, to re-evangelize or evangelize the non-Christian population in the western world.⁷ In a YWAM evangelistic strategy document entitled "Target 2000" we read:

"...we as Youth With A Mission, commit ourselves to: 12 years of: Focused Evangelism-Target, Engage and Pioneer into least evangelized nations, world-class cities [a city with at least one million inhabitants and/or of major regional or international significance], unevangelised people groups. 12 years of: Targeted Missionary Training-Mobilize, Equip, Place, and Support a multiplying missionary force from the whole body of Christ. 12 years of: Strategic Mercy Mission-Proclaim and Demonstrate the Gospel (in Word and Deed) through ministries of mercy designed to set people free from the bondage of poverty, human tragedy, and addiction; with particular emphasis on least-evangelized areas of the world."⁸

What we read here is another, less geographical and more demographic and socio-economic, approach to the task of world evangelisation for the 1990s. Since there remains only a handful of "unevangelised" nations (perhaps Nepal and Albania qualify), YWAM's geographical priorities are ordered by percentages of Christians and pressing material needs. YWAM believes the "Nine Worlds" left to "win for Christ" are:

"A. The "Unevangelised Worlds" without the Gospel:

1. The World of Islam
2. The Buddhist World
3. The World of Tribal People
4. The Hindu World

B. The "Evangelized Non-Christian Worlds" needing on-going and continued evangelism and/or discipleship:

5. The Communist World
6. Nominal Christians

C. Those "Worlds" stretching throughout the entire globe:

7. The Poor and Needy
8. The Urban world

9. The "Small Half"-children of the world"⁹

It is the considerable task of the world's Christian population to evangelize these nine worlds. With a listing such as the one above, it appears that parts of practically every region and country can be viewed as "mission fields". The task, from YWAM's perspective, is enormous.

We can summarize the "where" of neopentecostal cross-cultural missions by saying that the evangelisation task remains as large as the globe, but that the task is viewed through different lenses than in the past. In keeping with their like-minded contemporaries in the evangelical/fundamental and pentecostal traditions, neopentecostals have passed by political states in favour of socio-economic and religious groupings as evangelistic targets. By focusing their evangelistic efforts within similar cultures, even across several continents, both of our case-study churches appear successful. It remains to be seen if either church will be able to penetrate a truly foreign culture; because it is more evangelistically-oriented, the Deeper Life Church may stand a better chance than the more prosperity-oriented Rhema Bible Church.

The "How" of Mission

We now consider the strategies themselves. What are they? How are they used? Are they distinctive in any way? Not surprisingly, the neopentecostal responses to these questions differ from those who stand outside the movement. In essence, neopentecostalism incorporates no unique missiological strategies. In fact, the opposite may almost be more accurate; neopentecostals self-consciously use strategies found in the New Testament.

The Evangelistic Use of the Charismata

From a contemporary perspective, the one missiological strategy used by neopentecostals which could be viewed as distinctive is the "evangelistic use of charismata", a strategy that has been actively employed in some form by all varieties of twentieth century pentecostalism.¹⁰ The pentecostal Synan comments:

"The overall purpose of the *charismata* in Paul's Corinthian letter is the edification of the church (1 Corinthians 12.7; 14.12). Yet there is also a 'sign' value as in the case of *glossalalia* which Paul asserts is 'for unbelievers' (1 Corinthians 14.22). Mark lists tongues as a 'sign' that would follow believers along with healing, exorcism, and power over poisons and serpents (Mark 16.17-18). These are the evangelistic uses of the charismata designed to bring unbelievers into the Kingdom. The Pentecostals have majored in mass evangelistic 'healing' crusades featuring the charismata as the drawing card. Although these meetings have met

with some success in the United States, their most important function has been realized in third world nations. The crusades of T. L. Osborn in past decades and Reinhard Bonnke today have led thousands of pagans into the kingdom. The crucial point in these meetings is the "power encounter"...This occurs when a miraculous healing or exorcism convinces non-believers that the power of Jesus is greater than that of their own gods or local witchdoctors."¹¹

There is evidence to suggest that three of our four present case study groups subscribe in varying degrees to the use of "power encounters" for evangelistic purposes. That the charismata are an *integral* element of his evangelistic efforts is made crystal clear by the evangelist Bonnke:

"When I see miracles happening, miracles of healing, miracles of changed lives, miracles of cleansed sinners, I know who is at work. It is the Anointed One. These wonders are His fingerprint, His hallmark. *This* Christ is the Christ to preach: the yesterday-today-for-ever Christ. Every time we use His name, Jesus Christ, it is a declaration that He is anointed to deliver...The following is an important statement: 'Jesus can only be what you preach Him to be.'...Preach a limited Jesus, and He cannot be Himself. He doesn't save unless you preach a Saviour. He doesn't heal unless you preach the Healer. How many are guilty of stripping our precious Lord? Men stripped Him once for His crucifixion; unbelief strips Him again of His power. He is no longer mighty to save and heal in many a church. Using Paul's expression, He is 'straightened' in our lives, which means 'hemmed in with no room to work' (2 Corinthians 6.12)."¹²

That "Jesus can only be what you preach Him to be" and "unbelief strips Him again of His power" seems extraordinary rhetoric to those beyond the pentecostal tradition. Yet, to neo/pentecostals, the right words, the right faith, and the healing properties of the gospel are imperative components of the preached gospel; such emphases can be seen in the gospels preached by all our case study groups except YWAM.

While we might expect forthright rhetoric from Bonnke, the crusade evangelist, what can we expect to hear preached at the local church level, where a minister lives in continuous community with the parish? A Deeper Life minister under Kumuyi reports:

"The preacher has to preach as if everybody will receive their miracle. He doesn't want to puncture their faith. It is a question of my obedience to raise their level of faith. Of course, nobody can determine a miracle for anybody except God himself-and he may not do it. But it is our duty to raise the believers' level of faith. It is true that many people will not receive their miracle, but if you have all the faith, I believe you will either receive your miracle, or know for sure from God that the miracle is not for you. The Miracle Revival Hour is to raise the faith level. The Sunday worship is to teach and stabilize the people, so that they don't get discouraged by the hardships in their lives."¹³

The importance of the miraculous in Deeper Life's mission is confirmed by the researcher Ojo who notes that:

"healing is...regarded as an integral part of the evangelistic work of the [Deeper Life] Church and a form of Christian witness. The recent success of Deeper Life in

terms of its large membership and publicity could be attributed to its healing ministry."¹⁴

In comparing the tenor of the comments by Bonnke and the Deeper Life pastor we note that the local pastor's perception of the miraculous is obviously grounded in the reality of daily parish life; there will always be some who are healed and some who are not. On the other hand, Bonnke, who as an evangelist does not have to contend with the regularities of community life, can afford to preach a more triumphalist theology of healing. The churches which sponsor Bonnke crusades end up acting as theological touchstones for those attendees who may or may not have received healing.

YWAM's teaching on the evangelistic use of the charismata is less pronounced than that of either Bonnke or Kumuyi. One of the only discussions of the importance of spiritual "signs and wonders" for evangelism can be found in Lehmann's book on personal evangelism. In a chapter on Paul's principles of evangelism he writes:

"Paul preached in the power of God...(1 Thessalonians 1.5). Paul understood the message itself was powerful (Romans 1.16) but that words alone were not sufficient to draw blinded minds and hardened hearts to Jesus, unless God, by his Spirit, first puts his power on those words. He informed the intellectual Greeks of Corinth, 'My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power' (1 Corinthians 2.4-5). He resisted the temptation to rely on his own abilities, and relied instead on the power of God to bear witness of the word that was preached with 'signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit' (Hebrews 2.4)...Anyone who has been to the mission field and observed the powers of darkness at work in spiritism, witchcraft and false religions would agree that for a significant harvest we will need to see a corresponding display of the power of God through signs and wonders. Whenever there is a display of satanic power it needs to be countered with a greater display of the power of God (Exodus 7.10-13; Acts 13.6-12; 16.16-18; 1 John 4.4). We see this demonstrated again and again in the New Testament...When Peter spoke the word of faith to heal Aeneas, 'All who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord' (Acts 9.33-35)...After Jesus healed the nobleman's son the whole family immediately believed in him (John 4.47-53)."¹⁵

Consistent with YWAM's appeal to workers from many ecclesiastical traditions, Lehmann appears to encourage, but not to require, the evangelistic use of charismata. We also detect a note of generality in his writing. The numerous biblical references used by Lehmann help to establish a biblical precedent for signs and wonders (and this chapter presents several anecdotes to establish a historical precedent as well); however, when Lehmann gets to the section on personal application, he says, "perhaps the most effective way to begin moving in this 'supernatural evangelism' is to step out and exercise our spiritual gifts among non-Christians."¹⁶ The only gifts he mentions are ones which YWAM founder Cunningham has featured from the beginning: the word of wisdom and the word of

knowledge.¹⁷ Although it is wise of Lehmann to promote some of the "less difficult" signs and wonders for beginners, he never moves on to discuss the more "advanced" and spectacular signs and wonders. We are left, then, with the question: do these more difficult signs and wonders ever factor into the ministry of YWAM? Are they downplayed in print yet performed in mission settings?

While healing and other "power encounters" are integral elements in Rhema's ministry they are mentioned only occasionally. Passing reference to signs and wonders is made by Hagin in an article entitled "Boldness":

"(Acts 14.3) 'Long time therefore abode they **SPEAKING BOLDLY IN THE LORD**, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted **SIGNS AND WONDERS** to be done by their hands.' So we see that preaching the Word boldly in the Name of Jesus primarily produces two results: First, persecution. Second, signs and wonders. You see, Jesus will back you up when you boldly proclaim the truth of the gospel. Preach the Word and you will see God move, for He will confirm the Word with signs and wonders. But it takes boldness to do that!"¹⁸

While he does not offer an expanded description of signs and wonders, Hagin clearly affirms a theology of signs and wonders for Rhema's ministry. One reason for Rhema's scant reference to signs and wonders may be that they are viewed as normative in Rhema churches. Another explanation is that most of Rhema's mission energy is spent on informing Christians of their benefits in Christ. Its mission to the wider non-Christian world is one of the least mentioned aspects of the Rhema Bible Church.

Evangelicals especially have voiced theological reservations concerning the evangelistic use of the charismata. The Anglican, James Packer, questions the viability of signs and wonders to "augment the convincing effect of gospel truth on the unconvinced". He makes four points in this respect:

"(1) It is always possible to doubt whether 'wonders' are 'signs' from God, or indeed works of God at all. (2) It is irrational to expect that persons not convinced by the Bible's narratives of miracles will be any more impressed by unusual occurrences under their own noses in connection with the ministry of the biblical gospel. (3) The essence of the Holy Spirit's convincing work with regard to gospel truth is to make one unable to doubt that the God and Christ of the gospel are realities confronting one here and now, and that one needs their mercy. Not ever in Bible times did signs and wonders carry with them the guaranteed power of the Holy Spirit to bring this conviction in a way that the gospel word itself did not do. (4) The biblical case for expecting miraculous phenomena to accompany the gospel whenever and wherever it is ministered is not conclusive...they are the exception, not the rule, when they occur; and the claim I am responding to is that they ought to be the ordinary attesting and convincing accompaniment of the gospel at all times. In any case, the best evidence for augmenting the convincing power of gospel truth is the transformed lives of holy Christians-a much more telling demonstration of God's reality and resources than any physical wonder."¹⁹

That signs and wonders have not been effective implements for working spiritual soil cannot be cogently argued by Packer nor by anyone else. Seeing *is* believing. The use of signs and wonders *has* convinced hundreds of thousands of people that there is a God with more power than any other deity. Splendid displays of supernatural power *have* healed individuals and resulted in entire families and even villages switching their spiritual allegiances.

Contrary to Packer's third point is the multi-faceted ministry of Jesus. Healing was an integral part of Jesus' ministry; it was not merely a "side-show". In fact, there are numerous gospel accounts of Jesus stopping to heal people in the midst of his inter-town journeying. Apparently, Jesus did not reserve his healing power for private settings or to accompany his larger preaching opportunities. Many of those whom Jesus healed physically also "believed unto righteousness". Yet, Packer's third point also touches on the issue of potential excess in the evangelistic use of charismata. Prominently featuring signs and wonders can obscure other vital elements of the gospel message. In their advertising, neopentecostal groups sometimes promote miraculous healings to a fault.²⁰ In his book on St. Paul's missiology, Roland Allen holds up the apostle's approach as paradigmatic:

"St Paul did not convert or attempt to convert people by working miracles upon them. He did not attract people to Christianity by offering them healing. He did not heal on condition that they attended to his teaching. In this he was illustrating a principle which guided the Christian Church in her administration of charity throughout the early centuries of her history... But if St. Paul did not use his powers of healing as an inducement to people to receive his teaching, his use of miracles did yet greatly help him in his preaching. And that in four ways. (1) His miracles attracted hearers...(2) Miracles were universally accepted as proofs of the Divine approval of the message and work of him through whom they were wrought...(3) Miracles were a demonstration of the power of Jesus over pagan gods and demons...(4) Miracles were illustrations of the character of the new religion..."²¹

There appears to be a thin line separating the proper and improper evangelistic use of the charismata. On the one hand, signs and wonders are a powerful constituent of the gospel message. They were regular features of the gospel preached by Jesus and the early Church and they are regular features of the contemporary neo/pentecostal movement. Many people have come to embrace Christianity through a miraculous healing or sign. On the other hand, signs and wonders can be disproportionately featured, displacing other, less dramatic, but equally important teachings of the Christian faith. One of the dangers of stressing the miraculous in evangelism is the human fall-out which occurs when people don't receive the supernatural gift or healing which they have come to believe is normative for a Christian; this sometimes leads to a total abandonment of the Christian faith. Therefore, it is important for those who employ the charismata for evangelistic purposes to avoid the sensationalistic temptation to promise people more than Christ has promised to deliver.

We conclude with Packer's critique by noting that his final point is his most forceful: transformed, holy lives are the best gospel witness. This is usually true. There is a continuity of witness in the example of a consecrated life which is missing in the example of life which points only to a single miracle. The exception to Packer's assertion is, naturally, the miraculously healed *and* holy individual; in this instance, both the healing and holy living testify to the power of God at work in the world.

Other Strategies

Do we detect any other unique and remarkable components in neopentecostal mission strategy? Not really. We shall, however, make several important secondary observations. The first of these is that the mission activity of neopentecostals is characterized by innovation and risk. In their desire to win the maximum number of converts, neopentecostals entertain any and all venues. At first, alternative preaching venues were necessary due to ecclesiastical prejudice; now, they are a regular feature of the neo/pentecostal movement. Of the early pentecostals Robert Anderson notes:

"Thus, rank-and-file Pentecostal preachers stumped the country, preaching wherever they could get a group together. Increasingly refused the use of denominational and Holiness church buildings, they held meetings in school houses, warehouses and rented store-fronts; in private homes and under brush arbors, in tents or in open fields and forest clearings, in funeral parlors, gas stations, and cafes. They preached to millhands in their factories, to road gangs by the wayside, to workmen in railroad yards and iron works, and to farmhands in cotton fields. They exhorted sinners from courthouse steps and city parks, and in dance halls, gambling houses, and 'red light' districts. They journeyed by wagon and horseback, and finally by foot, into remote and rugged mountain regions."²²

Neopentecostals have maintained the classic pentecostal practice of viewing almost every situation and location as an opportunity to share the gospel. This theme is voiced by two of our case studies, Deeper Life and YWAM. From Kumuyi's pen we read:

"It is impressive to observe that the early church carried it out just like that. Everyone-the leaders and the laity, the men and the women spoke out and shared their faith with the lost. 'Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word' (Acts 1.8)...If you are a believer of the same category as the early church believers, you would go everywhere-on the bus, in the taxi, in the market, in the hospital, in the prison, at the dock, at the wharf, at the railway station, in the street, at the bus-stop-to evangelise. You would evangelise everywhere you can find people."²³

Similarly, YWAM's Lehmann writes:

"Evangelism is not for the church, and if we want to reach sinners we must go where they are-on the street, in bars, their homes, on the job, and the like. Jesus told us to go into all the world, not the church, and preach the gospel. When

challenged by the Pharisees as to why he ate and drank with tax collectors and sinners Jesus replied, 'I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Luke 5.32). The church is the place for *teaching* the Word of God, not preaching, so that those taught might be equipped to minister to a lost world-right where they are."²⁴

While the long-term results associated with this type of preaching can be questioned, undoubtedly some people are converted through this process. As well, unlike the early pentecostals, neopentecostal constituency is drawn from a larger radius of the socio-economic sphere; hence, the chance of more effectively penetrating all levels of society is greater. In encouraging all Christians to witness in every situation and locale, neopentecostal leaders are not only responding to Christ as they understand him; they are also insuring the future of the movement.

YWAM and Deeper Life's enthusiasm for "perpetual proclamation" is not articulated by either Bonnke or Hagin. In Bonnke's case, this silence may be explained by his vocation as crusade evangelist; in this capacity, Bonnke is more concerned with the actual conversion process than with principles of personal evangelism. In Hagin's case, we surmise from his propensity to preach the blessings of the believer that personal evangelism is simply not high on the Rhema agenda.

Another, complementary observation is that neopentecostalism, in its youthfulness, continues to be characterised by its methodological variety and its willingness to change strategies when necessary. In fact, the overall diversity of the neopentecostal missionary movement is one of its greatest strengths. Further, in its diversity, neopentecostalism has significantly increased its chances of survival as a movement.

In terms of diversity, YWAM can be viewed as the neopentecostal paradigm. Its concerns range from establishing missionary training schools in local churches, to urban "spiritual battle" prayer walks, to international relief through its two "mercy vessels". The importance of such methodological flexibility is underscored by Bonnke, who spent a number of years working in traditional missionary modes:

"When I was a young missionary in Africa, I worked on what was considered to be the proper methods of missions. My heart, nevertheless, longed to see the vast multitudes of precious African people rejoicing in Christ. The 'tried and proved' methods of traditional missionary endeavour, the way I was doing it, had only proved that a minute percentage of those around ever responded...We need more imaginative approaches rather than doing things a certain way just because that's the way they always have been done. Methods which have made little impact in the past are not likely to produce an impact now. Plodding along 'mechanically' might be called faithfulness, but our primary concern in evangelism is effectiveness, not this type of faithfulness. I am concerned, because there surely must be limiting factors hindering the gospel...These limiting factors possibly are the accepted methods of evangelism, which are still unchanged.

They could even be doctrines and sentiments which tell us to 'leave it all to God'..."²⁵

It is Bonnke's attitude toward methodology which most concerns us here. It is not that all the old methods are *passe* and all the new methods brilliant; rather, it is that any method, old or new, is to be constantly scrutinized as to its effectiveness for a particular people, time, and location. Ideally, methodological innovation will be part of a continual pruning process by which churches and organizations will maintain maximum spiritual effectiveness. In this respect, YWAM appears to excel.

And yet, as a consequence of its methodological innovation and risk taking, YWAM is sometimes criticised by missionaries and national Christians alike for its "hit-and-run" strategies. Although it may be connected officially with a local church or group, a YWAM team may create more difficulties than good in the long term. An African missionary complains:

"YWAM comes in and goes out and seems never to pay any attention to the ministries already there...When they came into our area, they didn't have any idea how what they were doing was going to affect those of us who were there on a longer-term basis. A lot of governments are so concerned for the tourist trade that they will do nothing to hinder the activities of people like YWAMers. But as soon as a group like that leaves, the national Christians and long-term missionaries feel the backlash. Surveillance is increased, people are jailed, houses searched, Bibles confiscated."²⁶

Like many Christians through the centuries, neopentecostals appear ready to risk ridicule and abuse in order to preach the gospel in every corner of the world. While their emphasis on it varies, our case studies all agree on the necessity of taking risks and making sacrifices in sharing the gospel. Rhema's references to sacrifice are infrequent and imprecise but extant; Hagin, Jr. writes:

"We must never allow discouragement to stop us from reaching out to those in need, even if we experience persecution...Regardless of what hostile or indifferent people might say, and regardless of the lack of understanding we might encounter from saint or sinner, *we cannot quit!* We cannot settle for a place *beside* the road. We have to stay *on* the road because we have a destination to reach. We have to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth before Jesus comes again (Matthew 24.14)."²⁷

Bonnke and Kumuyi are more specific. Bonnke writes:

"With the same anointing will often come the same persecutions. The Great Commission, the anointing and the opposition go together. As always, the followers of Jesus will be defamed and mocked by the wise of this world. They will consider you, a believer, to be out of touch if you do not follow them in their unbeliefs and in the so-called science of biblical rationalism. Those who expound this rationalism begin with a non-miraculous creed, and then take the scissors to Scripture to make it fit. If we share Christ's work, we share in His suffering. But 'if we suffer we shall also reign with Him'. If we are derided for our faith in God, we shall reign by our faith in God. When people say the same things about you as

they said about God's people in the past, rejoice that you are identified with them. Whoever treats you as the New Testament people were treated proves that you belong to that glorious New Testament company..."²⁸

Kumuyi asserts:

"Your call, ministry, ambition, desire and affection must be to live to preach the gospel. There may be danger, opposition, difficulty, ridicule, persecution and reproach, none of these things should move you...You must be committed to evangelism, no matter how high the mountain is, no matter how long the journey is, no matter how great the price you have to pay is..."²⁹

YWAM literature does not appear to emphasise risk and sacrifice in the context of personal evangelism; instead, the issue is discussed in the broader context of becoming a missionary. Moala writes:

"We need to make to God the commitment of heart that puts our life itself on the altar of His disposal. Then, wherever, whenever, and whatever He asks us to do, we jump to attention, and, in obedience, follow His commands. When we are prepared to make this kind of sacrificial commitment to God we will be able to easily reach those peoples who are still un-evangelized."³⁰

Within the neopentecostal chorus calling for risk and sacrifice we can identify particular voices. The voices of Rhema and Bonnke stand out by their reference to the persecution which may come from "the saints" as well as "the sinners". This "persecution of the saints" notion can be seen to reinforce the fact that elements of Rhema's message are often labelled "unorthodox" by other Christians.; in the ministry of Bonnke, this reference appears to be a general rebuttal to all those who advocate a non-pentecostal missiology. The voices of YWAM and Kumuyi stand out by their emphasis on the all-encompassing nature of the sacrifice and risk; these groups assert that everything in the believer's life is to be "put on the altar".

The fact that neopentecostals posit the miraculous as normative is, in and of itself, a daring venture, particularly in the west. To preach a gospel which, by definition, includes physical healing before thousands of people, and to pray for such healing to take place before double that number of eyes is very risky business indeed. Morton Kelsey remarks that:

"To maintain an experiential theology, in fact, requires all the courage a man can muster because it means denying the prevailing scientism of our modern world and remaining open to an encounter with the living God."³¹

From this perspective, neopentecostals face potential ridicule, as well as potential success, every time they offer prayers for healing.

Somewhat surprising and worthy of comment is the fact that all four of our case study groups suggest that risk, sacrifice, and even suffering are a part of the Christian life. Privilege, not sacrifice, is the word normally associated with the larger neopentecostal movement. Certainly, within the movement, blessings are featured and sacrifice is downplayed and even redefined. Nonetheless, any suggestion that there may be costs associated with the gospel goes beyond the stereotypical perception of the movement.

Critique

In neopentecostal missiology, proclamation precedes, and is perceived to be more necessary than, presence evangelism; therefore, we need to examine the elements of proclamation evangelism in a strategic light. Although it is really more an evangelistic style (borne out of evangelical and pentecostal-type convictions) than an articulated strategy, proclamation is a potent formula. Proclamation appears to be one of the surest reasons for the numerical success of global neo/pentecostalism.

Neopentecostals derive their elements of proclamation and demonstration from the exceptionally oral-aural pentecostal tradition. Neopentecostals, like pentecostals, place a strong emphasis on preaching, teaching, testimony, revivals, corporate prayer (sometimes simultaneous), and singing. The visual and physical senses are also stimulated through healings and dance. The pentecostal William MacDonald writes:

"Pentecostal theology, past and present, has had the character of a 'witness' experience. This witness tends to have at its deepest level an oral-aural versus an optic-literary transmission. It is well-suited for preaching, testifying, and one-to-one contacts. That the one addressed is "there" and in some sense accountable to God is the dynamic of the witness."³²

How is the oral-aural ecclesiastical tradition utilized? Simply. Neo/pentecostal preaching, testimony, healing, and the like are used to excite the emotions in a heavenly direction: the unconverted and the backslider repent and the redeemed lift praises. Souls are stirred so as to elicit the appropriate spiritual responses such as contrition, repentance, thankfulness, love, and compassion. The many testimonies from, and activities of, our case-study groups amply support this conclusion.³³ Chilean pentecostal pastor Juan Sepulveda describes the centrality of religious experience in pentecostalism:

"Pentecostalism...offers the possibility of a particularly intense religious experience. The pentecostal God is a living God who overpowers subjectivity, shutting out the possibility of doubt. It also excludes criticism that comes from culture-common sense-and pre-existing religiosity. The intensity of religious feelings is shown literally in testimony, with expressions such as 'to be taken' by the Holy Spirit, to receive a kind of 'electric shock' that produces 'heat', 'joy', 'strength from within' of irrepressible expansiveness that places the individual in the midst of an experience from which he/she will not separate. Only a very

intense religious experience can break away from the common sense and impression that are found in popular culture, (which considers pentecostals 'fanatics', 'lunatics'), and at the same time grant a radical reorientation to the individual, providing the person with a new way of life."³⁴

Corporate worship is the most common backdrop for the "drama" of the oral-aural elements of neo/pentecostalism. The frequency and variety of Sunday and weekly services held by Rhema and Deeper Life attest to the importance these churches place on coming together as "the body of Christ". It is in public gatherings that the testimony of the power of God can be most widely preached, sung about, and displayed.

Drawing on a predominantly experiential theology, neo/pentecostal worship is highly participatory. Since the Holy Spirit can fall in equal measure upon both the doctor and the illiterate, the clergy and the laity, all worshippers are viewed as potential participants. Corporateness is demonstrated by the high percentage of lay participation; laity have a regular opportunity to join in with a service's singing, prayer, prophecy, testimony, and dance.³⁵ Again, we refer to the pentecostal MacDonald:

"Nowhere is the priesthood of all believers celebrated more gloriously than in our corporate worship. Never would a Pentecostal pastor turn his back on the people and bow in prayer to a God 'behind the curtain' in Old Testament fashion. Instead he faces the group of assembled believers, because the Lord is not outside but stationed among the saints. There are those times when the leader of worship will stand in God's presence, and times when he too will sit when the people are sitting. In these seemingly leaderless moments, there is always recognized leadership by the One whose divine presence is being recognized. How do we account for this priestly character of the congregation? Surely all Christians, no matter what their denomination, are priests by virtue of their regeneration. But it is peculiarly the gifts distributed by the Lord, who moves about where He is accorded the freedom, that enable the church to minister in the 'holy place'. These spiritual gifts facilitate an awareness of the Lord's presence. They are by definition 'manifestations of the Spirit' (1 Corinthians 12.7)...If another spirit, whether it be carnal or diabolical, seizes the freedom of the meeting for manifesting itself, it is recognized and halted through 'the ability to distinguish between spirits' (1 Corinthians 12.10)."³⁶

In terms of sheer magnitude and emotion, however, the ultimate form of neo/pentecostal corporate assembly has to be the revival. In no other ecclesiastical setting are so many people brought together for the expressed purpose of gospel proclamation as at a revival. A typical revival meeting will begin with singing, focus on the sermon and the "altar call" (where people are invited to come up to the altar to make public their profession of Christian faith), and end with prayers for healing. The revivalist's sermon is the most humanly persuasive part of the service. Researcher Paul Gifford comments on Bonnke's preaching at the latter's 1986 crusade in Harare:

"...Nor is the preaching an end in itself. It is immediately practical. It is directed to the climax of the evening. the 'altar call' when all who have not yet done so are

exhorted to come forward to be 'born again'. Thus the speaker's aim is not to stimulate thought nor to explain ideas or even to expound the Bible. It is not to impress with his erudition. Nor is he out to draw admiring applause. His aim is to bring about an immediate and enthusiastic conversion. His goal is to have the listener running to the front of the tent to proclaim a public commitment, while those already 'born again' assist by the fervour of their singing and praying in tongues. The preaching is thus an exercise to a specific goal."³⁷

Strategically, an evangelist is used to "reap the harvest" for the local churches which sponsor the crusade. Bonnke frequently mentions his links with the local churches of a crusade location. It is an interdependent ministry:

"...we are all dependent upon one another, and if the evangelist needs the churches, the churches need the evangelist. The hand needs the body and the body needs the hand...If churches ignore the evangelist, they shackle him. If the evangelist ignores the church, he is throwing out a lifebelt with no lifeline attached."³⁸

Bonnke has continued to hone the strategy of revival, constructing an elaborate infrastructure of intercessory prayer "warriors" and follow-up teams. The prayer team arrives in the crusade location many days before the first crusade evening and is responsible for instructing hundreds to several thousands of local church volunteers in the practice of intercessory prayer. Such prayer continues throughout the entire crusade. Bonnke views intercessory prayer as a "secret weapon" in his evangelistic arsenal:

"The effectiveness of this strategy certainly has been proved. With this intercessory backing the Enemy must withdraw, leaving unconverted people open to the power of the word of God. There is a great harvest of souls, an edification of the body of Christ and a fulfilment of the word of God. We all thus become partners with Christ and shareholders in His harvest. Our intercessors hold back the armies of Satan until souls are safe inside the kingdom of God. This strategy originated with God, and is therefore blessed by Him. It affects the individual Christian, the churches, the city, the country, and above all the unbeliever. Intercession builds a highway for the evangelism that wins the world."³⁹

The issue of follow-up, the Achilles' heel of crusade evangelism, receives some press from Bonnke; his newsletters are a periodic source for such reports. At time, the reports are very accurate. In one such newsletter, the general secretary of the 1989 Jos crusade planning committee, Rev. Kenneth Ononeze, reported that not only had the 250 participating churches multiplied but twenty brand new churches had sprung up since the crusade; the thousands of decision cards were co-ordinated so that a convert was assigned to a pastor in his or her locality. In another newsletter we read as a result of the 1988 Nairobi crusade that "17.400 new converts...have been baptised in water and plugged into Bible fellowships and churches".⁴⁰ With the use of such a follow-up programme the long-term spiritual fruit of a

crusade becomes more a reflection of the abilities of the local ecclesiastical community than that of the evangelist.

At other times, the reports are vague and appear exaggerated. On the 1990 Kaduna, Nigeria crusade which drew 1.67 million people over six nights, Bonnke is quoted as saying:

"The people received Jesus as their saviour by the hundreds of thousands. Those masses included a number of Muslims, and they received the most spectacular healings from Jesus...On Saturday, the Holy Spirit fell on the gigantic crowd of half a million, with hundreds of thousands receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit!..."⁴¹

Bonnke's video summary of the 1990 Bamenda, Cameroon crusade includes this statement:

"In a single service there were signs and wonders and up to 45.000 to 50.000 people. It seemed to me like 100% or perhaps, 98 or 99% salvation response every time. It has been a joy and a privilege, yet a battle. It is in battles like these that we remember and need you (prayer partners) the most to keep on lifting up holy hands on our behalf."⁴²

The fact that the target audience for these report is Bonnke's prayer supporters is significant. Like most missionaries supported by donations, Bonnke is aware that donors want to hear how well their money has been invested. In claiming gospel responses numbering hundreds of thousands or 98%, Bonnke is sure to impress western supporters who are often counting spiritual responses by tens.

However, such figures cast doubt on Bonnke's credibility. Certainly there is a distinction between first-time converts and those renewing their commitment to the Christian faith; salvation is not a decision to be made each time a crusade evangelist is in the area. Further, because sub-Saharan Africa has a large Christian population and Christians from a number of churches support every crusade, there must be a significant minority of Christians at nearly every crusade; yet, the crusade reports read as if Bonnke preaches only to masses of pagans. While this type of reporting is likely to impress supporters, it misrepresents the vital, growing Church across most of sub-Saharan Africa.

The neo/pentecostal oral-aural mode of communicating the gospel operates especially well in the historically oral-aural societies of the non-western world. Its style of preaching, teaching, and testimonies are reminiscent of the story-telling tradition. Its mode of corporate worship allows each and every worshipper to participate, thus enhancing the sense of community. Dreams and visions, which inform and guide the daily lives of many two-thirds world peoples, have always been taken seriously within the neo/pentecostal tradition.⁴³ Suspicions are not aroused when oral transmission and personal experiences are utilized as

documentation for religious realities. Hollenweger hints at other attractive features of participatory religion for oral-aural societies:

"For oral people, dance is archival and documentary. Dance, speaking in tongues and healing of the sick...awaken confidence, make people feel accepted and loved by God. They strengthen trust in the inborn inventive gifts of the people bestowed on them by the creator Spirit, and encourage them to recognize the organizational and liturgical gifts of their pre-Christian existence as gifts of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁴

In the more sceptical western world, and perhaps because of (instead of despite) neo/pentecostalism's success, the yellow flags have been waving at the perils with which an oral and experiential theology are beset. The thematic concern is that an experientially based salvific theology produces ephemeral and shallow converts; by too narrow a focus on the charismata neo/pentecostals remain theologically emaciated. Some pentecostals themselves are aware of this danger:

"Experience is used to affirm a doctrine or decision, approve or vindicate a man, sanctify a communion, or canonize a mode of worship. In traditional Pentecostalism, this has led to emotional excesses in worship, erroneous doctrinal affirmations, and false personal judgments."⁴⁵

Evangelical James Packer goes into more detail in his assessment of the means of conversion. He is particularly uncomfortable with the revival-related "crisis conversion":

"Conversion itself is a process. It can be spoken of as a single act of turning in the same way that consuming several dishes and drinks can be spoken of as a single act of dining, and as we have seen, revivalism encourages us to think of a simple, all-embracing, momentary crisis as its standard form. But conversion, which was defined above as man's turning to God seen from man's stand-point, is better understood if viewed as a complex process that for adults ordinarily involves the following: thinking and re-thinking; doubting and overcoming doubts, soul-searching and self-admonition; struggle against feelings of guilt and shame; and concern as to what realistic following of Christ might mean. It may culminate in a personal crisis that will afterwards be remembered as 'the hour I first believed'...sometimes it does not head up into a single conscious crisis, even for attenders at evangelistic crusades. God is lord in conversion, as elsewhere, and experiences differ."⁴⁶

Although Packer's criticism is as old as the technique of revival itself, it contains some validity. Displayed in the spiritual nursery following a revival are many premature infants, those for whom the chances of survival are reduced due to a prior lack of spiritual knowledge and nourishment. Unfortunately, the need for the acute attention and care necessary for the "catch-up" process of the spiritually premature cannot always be readily ascertained.

Nevertheless, *all* spiritual newborns need care; none are born theologically mature. Some babies are born in better health than others, but all babies must be suckled on the "milk

of the Word". Would Packer go further and suggest that some spiritual babies should never have been born? Is not the 10% survival rate one year after a crusade (cited by Packer) better for the Church than the mostly negative growth rate of the west's mainline denominations which, as a rule, disdain revival strategy?

Packer concludes his paper with the suggestion that the external means of conversion is:

"the gospel message, the word of God, preached, taught, read, made visible in the sacraments, explained in books, and embodied in the life of the Christian community."⁴⁷

The difficulty with this proposal is that a large chunk of its potency is wrapped up in the written word; yet, the sad reality is that a significant percentage of the world's population is actually and/or functionally illiterate.⁴⁸ In light of this fact, it is not difficult to see why the evangelistic use of the charismata can be so effective a contemporary strategy.

If, as Packer agrees, one of the many legitimate goals of the Church is to evangelize and make disciples of all nations, then this important goal deserves to be done with the best of all available methods. Certainly one criteria of "best" is effectiveness, and this is where Packer's argument breaks down: his method, which is represented by the traditional, western mainline Church, has resulted in more than a decade of steady and alarming decline, whereas the method he denigrates is producing significant world-wide gains. Additionally, many "traditional" churches in the two-thirds world are growing for reasons similar those associated with neo/pentecostalism; they emphasise the miraculous as well as lay leadership and evangelism.⁴⁹ We suggest that Packer's theological reservations lose much of their authority in the light of these facts.

The "Who" of Mission

"We have only one generation to reach this generation...The perfect strategy of God is complete. He included you in it, and He included me in it. We are woven into and enmeshed in His plans, plans that cannot fail... When God puts His hand upon us, He does two things. First, He gives us a ministry, then He opens a door to service."

Reinhard Bonnke, 1989⁵⁰

Who constitutes the neopentecostal missionary force? In theory, and nearly in practice, every Christian. "While not all of us are called to be cross-cultural evangelists, we are all called to be witnesses."⁵¹ Each member of the Deeper Life Church is exhorted to be engaged in proclamation evangelism.⁵² Rhema graduates are encouraged to take the Rhema teachings

into all the world.⁵³ YWAM considers even the children of its staff as potential evangelists.⁵⁴ Neopentecostals are convinced that all Christians are called to give regular verbal witness to their faith in Christ. Furthermore, they believe that all Christians have been endowed with special abilities to advance the kingdom of God.

One of the most practical strategies of the neopentecostal missionary movement is the use of young people as missionaries. Comprising nearly half the population of most non-western countries, youth have been viewed by neopentecostals as a vast reservoir of indigenous missionary talent. Of our case study groups, YWAM is the most obvious example of an organisation committed to sending young evangelists. It was the notion that young people "like a challenge" that prompted Loren Cunningham to found YWAM. It evidently works. With evangelistic opportunities before them, tens of thousands of young adults have worked under the auspices of YWAM.

There are, however, a number of valid criticisms that can be directed at the YWAM principle that youth are a viable missionary force. A lack of emotional and theological maturity is the most serious of these.⁵⁵ To increase its candidates' effectiveness, YWAM uses careful screening, experienced leadership, and requires brief but formal theological instruction. Further, YWAM hints that whatever young people lack in maturity is often made up for by their infectious enthusiasm and energy.⁵⁶

A short commitment to missionary work, which is often ideal for a young adult, is also questioned by critics. Does the person actually make any lasting contribution to the cause of world evangelisation? Perhaps not. But YWAM and other short-term mission agencies know that young people who have participated in a three to twenty four month project are much more likely to actively support missionary ventures for the rest of their lives than are their peers with no participatory history. As well, a small but significant percentage of "short-termers" eventually become career missionaries.

What roles are accorded women in neopentecostal missiological strategy? These vary within our case-study groups. We detect residual elements of the free-spirited women preachers of classic pentecostalism as well as the women-only ministries of the evangelical and fundamentalist traditions. The most openly supportive statement on the role of women in ministry comes from YWAM:

"We affirm that God wants both young and old, male and female, in positions of leadership and responsibility in our mission."⁵⁷

Bonnke includes women in his exhortations for more evangelists:

"I constantly scan the horizons for other anointed men and women who may take up this challenge of the word of God for Holy Ghost evangelism."⁵⁸

Neither organisation seems to offer any more details on the specific role of women in missions. Whether Cunningham and Bonnke have reservations about supporting the ministry of ordained women is not made clear. We recall, though, that both men grew up in pentecostal homes and that Cunningham's mother was an ordained Assemblies of God minister. We may safely surmise that, at least, both Cunningham and Bonnke view women as anointed evangelists and leaders in the neopentecostal missionary movement.

There appear to be two facets to understanding the role of women in the Rhema and Deeper Life churches. In theory, the churches reflect the pentecostal tradition and in practice, the evangelical. On the role of women Hagin maintains:

"In no other churches I know of are women more free to speak, teach, preach, pray, shout, and hold responsible positions than in Pentecostal or Full Gospel assemblies. Yet no louder claim is made to follow the Word of God wholly and solely than the claim of Full Gospel and Pentecostal churches. In fact, that's what is meant by Full Gospel-following the full truth. And in Full Gospel and Pentecostal Bible schools and seminaries, women and girls are found studying the Word of God in preparation for distinctively Christian service as missionaries, evangelists, and preachers...When it comes to the Church-when it comes to spiritual things-when it comes to the Body of Christ-there are no distinctions between men and women. As far as God is concerned, there are none."⁵⁹

In theory, then, Hagin expresses no theological reservations, only affirmation, about women participating in every aspect of the Christian ministry. In practice, however, it appears that women have little opportunity to preach and teach before the larger Rhema congregation in Tulsa. As of August 1989, only minister's wives were represented on the pastoral team of the Rhema Bible Church in Tulsa.⁶⁰ Yet, from the national and international reports in *The Word of Faith* magazine, we know that female graduates of the Rhema Bible Training Center are engaged in various healing and evangelistic ministries. Several of the reports read as if the woman is working as the primary healer and evangelist in a particular area.⁶¹ It appears that Rhema women have to wait to graduate and then look beyond the Tulsa complex to "exercise their gifts" as preachers and evangelists.

Unlike Hagin, Kumuyi does not appear to unequivocally affirm, theologically, the role of women in ministry. Instead, he offers two practical reasons for the less visible role of women in Deeper Life. The first of these is related to their role as mothers:

"I do not see that Scripture goes against women ministering. I would see from the Scriptures that there is more for the men, because the women have a lot of things to do at home. We still want them to take care of the family and the children. We wouldn't want their ministry in the church to conflict with the training of their children at home. So we just try to strike a balance. In the early days our single

women led Bible studies, but now that they have been getting married, we have slightly changed so that they can fulfil their roles at home, and work with their husbands, rather than working alone."⁶²

Another reason suggested by Kumuyi is that women have an important ministry to other women. Kumuyi explains that in Deeper Life:

"...there is a lot that the women need to learn which we cannot teach in the regular services...then in personal evangelism, it's easy sometimes for women who have known the Lord to reach women".⁶³

We conclude that while both cultural and practical factors continue to mitigate against the corporate ministry and leadership opportunities of many neopentecostal women, no real theological resistance can be detected in any of our case study groups. In this, neopentecostals reflect contemporary classic pentecostalism.⁶⁴ Women are anointed as preachers, teachers, healers, and prophetesses and yet are able, only at certain times and in certain locations, to exercise these spiritual gifts as freely as their male colleagues. While their opportunities are often limited in a formal ecclesiastical setting, women appear able to minister without hindrance in a missionary environment. That they are able to do so is a further explanation for the breadth of the neopentecostal missionary movement.

Methodological Reflections

We conclude our chapter on neopentecostal mission strategy by reflecting on the importance of methodology as a means to an end. The intentionality of neopentecostal mission strategy has translated into the rapid expansion of the movement. While rapid growth does not preclude the possibility of genuine sanctification, it can sometimes obscure its importance. In a church like Deeper Life which places a very high priority on the necessity of every member acting as an evangelist, the importance of training its recent converts must not be neglected; without continued teaching, new converts will remain biblically naive. A statement from the WCC's San Antonio Report is a poignant reminder of the importance of humanizing the missionary "task":

"People cross frontiers in mission not merely to go to 'get a job done' or to assist a partner church in a particular task. Rather they are sent and received as persons, to share all that they are and their denominational and cultural heritage, to affirm and share life in Christ in all its richness."⁶⁵

Because the neopentecostal missionary movement tends to be task and numbers oriented, the WCC's statement is apropos. Strategies which encourage full Christian maturity, including the theological training of its leadership, will be essential to neopentecostalism's continued growth and depth as a movement.

Another methodological question concerns the role of the Holy Spirit in neopentecostal mission strategy. We have discerned from Chapter Three that the third member of the trinity figures prominently in neopentecostal mission theology. It is the Spirit who convicts people of their need to be released from sin's captivity. It is the Spirit who empowers women and men to be dynamic witnesses to the salvific love and power of Jesus Christ. The Spirit is perceived, then, as an active agent in the lives of both witnesses and non-Christians. How important, though, is the Spirit to the actual means employed to aid in the conversion process? Very! Missiologist Harry Boer believes that it is possible, despite all good intentions, to quench the Spirit through poor methodology:

"In reading missionary literature, especially that of a devotional kind, one will frequently find reference made to the indispensable need of the Spirit in missionary witness. He must give the power, He must create the spirit of missionary devotion, perseverance and self-sacrifice, He must open the hearts of hearers, He must establish the spoken word. True though all these observations are, the impression is generally left that the Spirit will manifest His power wherever men witness sincerely in the name of Christ, regardless of the means employed to effect their witness. Presumably, the only condition that exists for obtaining the blessing and power of the Spirit is the desire for the conversion of men and the glory of God. It is but seldom suggested that this desire has frequently found, and frequently finds, expression in missionary methods and approaches that contradict the nature of the Spirit and the divine laws that govern His operations. Paradoxically, the good desire, which is, in itself, born of the Spirit, may find expression in a manner which is calculated to quench the Spirit. The failure to see this springs from an illegitimate division in Christian missionary thinking and action between the goal to be achieved and the means used to attain it. It is supposed that the goal is more important, more fundamental, than the methods that are employed to reach it. Therefore once the end to be achieved has become clear, the way that is to be followed to reach it is considered to be a rather secondary matter...The fatal fallacy in the assumption that means, in distinction from ends, may be subjectively determined is that it is not legitimate to separate means from ends. Intelligent prosecution of a task in things natural pays the closest attention to methods employed and seeks to determine the laws that govern the most effective realization of a given end. This same care ought to be shown in things spiritual."⁶⁶

Later in the chapter Boer broadly compliments pentecostal methodology mostly because it is especially effective in achieving one of the desired "ends": conversion.⁶⁷ He only hints at any methodological shortcoming of other ecclesiastical traditions: "Perhaps it has been a great fault of us western missionaries that we have not been able to conceive that the ecstatic can be decent and orderly."⁶⁸

Despite its strategic success, neo/pentecostal mission methodology has, until recently, received little press in missiological literature.⁶⁹ In fact, twentieth century missiology has been dominated by just two streams of strategy consciousness: ecumenical "presence" and evangelical "proclamation".⁷⁰ These two paradigms have been, until the last decade or so, the standard models around which strategical missiological dialogue have focused.

We want to suggest that neo/pentecostal methodology now represents a third paradigm for mission; we shall call this new paradigm "proclamation plus signs and wonders". Much of the case for this third model can be linked to neo/pentecostalism's longevity as a movement. Much to the chagrin of some, neo/pentecostalism has not run its course and collapsed.

Any recognition of neo/pentecostal methodology as a third, strategical paradigm has been halting and slow. This reluctant recognition comes as no surprise since it has taken the liberal and evangelical churches decades even to acknowledge pentecostalism as anything other than a theologically deformed child of the holiness movement. Only the combination of neo/pentecostal burgeoning, mainline decline, and evangelical leveling has thrust the "new" paradigm into the missiological spotlight.

Both the liberal and evangelical traditions now give some press to the neopentecostal movement and its missiological paradigm. As we would expect, much of the press is critical; this, however, is a signal that the movement and its strategies are being taken seriously. We look at two rather diverse examples of such critique, beginning with the liberal tradition. The WCC's San Antonio Report of 1990 acknowledges neo/pentecostalism under Section IV.1: Popular Religiosity:

"In exchanging our experiences we have seen that much of the vitality and evangelizing dynamism of the Christian faith is expressed in a variety of popular expressions of religion (Pentecostal churches, base ecclesial communities, African independent churches, etc.). Despite their significance and numbers, these expressions of Christian faith are seldom included in our discussions and ecumenical sharing."⁷¹

Here, we sense a glimmer, just a glimmer, of admiration for the "vitality and evangelizing dynamism" of popular religiosity. Yet why is there no suggestion that the elements of this "dynamism" be examined at closer range?

Another perception of neopentecostalism's mission strategy can be seen within the missions and evangelism department at evangelical Fuller Theological Seminary in California; this department has fully absorbed the "proclamation plus signs and wonders" paradigm as a viable, third paradigm for mission. The seminary has offered (controversial and sporadic) courses on signs and wonders and several of its faculty have honed an evangelical-pentecostal theology.⁷²

The time has come for the neo/pentecostal missiological paradigm of "proclamation plus signs and wonders" to be given a place alongside its contemporaries, "presence" and "proclamation", in the ongoing dialogue of mission strategy. To some Christians, such a

paradigm represents a foreign and highly objectionable expression of Christianity, but to other Christians such a paradigm represents the essence of biblical Christianity. Put in an objective and unemotional strategical light, most of the world's churches with a high per annum growth rate are churches which proclaim the gospel with signs and wonders. It is certainly true that growth and size are no indicators of quality, yet it is equally true that growth and size *are* an indicator that specific needs are being met. If for no other reason than this, the neo/pentecostal missiological paradigm is worthy of consideration.

In the next chapter we will consider the controversial issue of ecumenism and seek to understand what type of ecumenism is most favoured by a neopentecostal missiology and why.

Chapter Six

Ecumenism

"To fill the world with the message of Christ is a task beyond the power of individual Churches. And victory and defeat of the individual Churches in this service is the victory of us all and the defeat of us all."

Johannes Blauw, 1962¹

Prevailing Attitudes

The word "ecumenism" evokes a wide range of responses within the Church. For some churches, ecumenism promises the hope of visible unity in mission, and represents an opportunity for intra- and inter-faith dialogue. For others, it is a term bristling with the negative connotations of compromise. For still other churches, ecumenism is a vague term, its meaning and potential impact obscured by decades of verbiage. Ecclesiastical attitudes toward ecumenism, then, span the emotional spectrum: they range from hopeful enthusiasm, to comfortable complacency, to angry rejection.

To a considerable degree, a church's ecumenical vision is usually a product of its age and theology. Most of the older, and usually more theologically liberal, denominational churches are now favourably inclined toward wide ecumenical ventures. Conversely, most of the younger, and usually more theologically conservative and sectarian churches are inclined to identify only with their theological kin. Three churches serve to illustrate the point. The well-established Anglican communion is a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC); the Interdenominational Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which is seventy years old, is a member of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America and the Pentecostal World Conference, but not of the World Council of Churches; the youngest church, the Rhema Bible Church is affiliated only with other faith churches; it has no ties with either the WCC or the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America. Thus, the Anglican communion is formally affiliated with the broadest cross-section of the Church; the Foursquare communion is formally affiliated with the larger pentecostal Church in the United States, and the Rhema Church is formally affiliated only with other faith churches. The ecumenical ties of these three churches, then, illustrate that a church's inter-church relations are usually a result of the factors of age and maturity.

There are logical explanations why newer sectarian churches tend to have little or no immediate interest in inter-church relations. These churches are in the consolidation process,

both theologically and sociologically, and their priorities are concentrated on concerns that normally precede ecumenism. Such immediate concerns include topics like the formulation of a statement of faith, establishing membership requirements, and building programmes. These churches are also characterised by their aggressive evangelism. Only after they are well established do such churches normally consider co-operative evangelistic ventures. Scant and narrow references to inter-church co-operation in the preaching and literature of sectarian churches confirm the suspicion that ecumenism is initially irrelevant to these churches.

Although new sectarian churches virtually ignore the wider ecumenical movement, the reverse is not the case. Since the 1950s, the decade from which the pentecostal movement began to show signs of rapid growth, many conciliar Christians have demonstrated an increased interest in dialogue with pentecostal and neopentecostal Christians. Setting the tone in the 1950s, Lesslie Newbigin comments on the necessity of the arduous task of conciliar-pentecostal dialogue:

"The modern ecumenical movement has hitherto been, in the main, a meeting place of the Catholic and Protestant streams of Christian faith and life...the Pentecostal stream has been largely outside of it...its contribution is needed if the ecumenical conversation is to bear its proper fruit. For the absence of that contribution (by no means a complete absence), the Churches which are in the ecumenical movement must take a share of the blame. They have been too unwilling to pay heed to the radical criticism of their life which they would have to have had to face. They have too often been content to live too much on their past reputation, to be too much at home in the world. But one must frankly say that a very heavy responsibility rests on the other side. The decades have witnessed the rise of the ecumenical movement have witnessed also the rise of innumerable bodies which, claiming exclusive possession of the Holy Spirit, have separated themselves from their fellow Christians...The propaganda of these organisations against the ecumenical movement is marked in many cases by such a blatant self-righteousness, and such a total negation of all charity, that one is tempted to despair of them altogether. But we must not yield to this temptation, for within these same movements we must recognise authentic marks of the Holy Spirit's presence, and also a witness to truth which the traditional Protestant and Catholic alike need to learn...We must therefore assure our brethren of our willingness to learn from them in the fellowship of the ecumenical movement, and we must at the same time bear witness to them concerning the things which the Holy Spirit has taught us....We must tell them that in order to enter into the ecumenical conversation with us it is not necessary for them to abandon any of their distinctive convictions, but only to recognise us as fellow Christians sharing with them-even though we be in error-the same Spirit. We must ask them to consider whether by denying all fellowship with us, they do not sin against the Holy Spirit who is in them, and whether faithfulness to their Lord and ours does not absolutely require us to seek unity with one another."²

A growing pragmatism is evident in conciliar church language over the last several years. Faced with sharp attrition in the west, WCC member churches are being encouraged

by some to identify and incorporate various characteristic elements of neo/pentecostalism. The Catholic scholar Killian McDonnell suggests that:

"The skills in 'primary evangelisation' in classic pentecostalism should be evaluated and incorporated into the liturgical-sacramental form of Catholic worship and evangelisation, while respecting their integrity. Let the success of the classic pentecostals be a systematic suspicion with which we critique our liturgical forms. Ecumenism means at least that much."³

Although practically all Nigerian churches are experiencing growth, the increase of the "healing churches" has been particularly noticed. In 1979, Okeke advocated in *The Nigerian Christian*, the Christian Council of Nigeria's periodical, that the Nigeria Church incorporate its zealous members:

"Today the emergence of healing churches is in the ascendancy all over Nigeria. It is not generally true that the healing churches with a special emphasis on the miraculous, the prophetic and the other-worldly are a result of stress or crisis situation...What the situation points to is that the existing Churches do not supply the needed spiritual stimulation to her members. The youths are crying out to the church leaders for a greater awareness of the spiritual thirst that people are suffering in this country. Many of them have risen with the evangelical message and are making their response to the call of Christ felt among us. The zeal of the youths as well as the spirituality of the leaders of the healing houses should be harnessed by the Churches for the more efficient and diversified witnessing of the saving power of Christ to all in this land. The Church cannot utilize what is operating outside her control. Therefore to drive the spiritual healers, prophets, visioners and evangelical youth societies out of the church will be a great mistake which the church will regret very soon. The zeal of the youths for proclaiming Christ to all the world must be directed by the church. The spiritual healing and psychological satisfaction which the healing churches provide must be brought into the church."⁴

However, not all conciliar Christians entertain the notion of learning from neo/pentecostal churches. Especially beyond the WCC's Division of World Mission and Evangelism, there are sentiments like this one expressed by Bittlinger:

"...unfortunately, there are also, throughout the world, alongside the confessionally assimilated charismatic movements, many so-called charismatic groups and individuals (we have only to think of some of the charlatans in the 'Electronic Church!') who have no respect for any confessional boundaries and propagate an 'ecumenism' that has nothing whatever in common with genuine ecumenism. These pseudo-charismatics, moreover, produce what they call 'spirit-guided' and 'charismatic' phenomena that are really nothing of the kind. I am sometimes tempted to tell these charlatans what Paul told the sorcerer Simon in Samaria: 'You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God' (Acts 8.21)."⁵

In addition to conciliar attitudes like Bittlinger's, neopentecostal presence at the conciliar round table is also hindered by its own exclusivist self-understanding and language. For example, Newbigin asks those pentecostals who shun fellowship with the historic Christian Church "only to recognise us as fellow Christians", but even this is a concession

which some neo/pentecostals are reluctant to make. An anaemic pneumatology and a liberal Christology are factors which give pause to neo/pentecostals considering the older denominations' request to be treated as fellow Christians. If they are Christians, where is the evidence of the Holy Spirit among them? Bonnke sums up the attitude of many neopentecostals when he states:

"When we read the words which came from the mouth of Jesus, it does not describe much of the religion around us today. Thank God for the modern outpouring of the Holy Spirit by which hundreds of millions are beginning to see what Jesus meant. Otherwise church religion is sometimes like a graveyard. If anything stirs in some of these spiritual cemeteries, any sign of life, it scares people to death. Resurrection power is the last thing expected. Resurrection power vandalises the graves and breaks all cemetery by-laws. Some Church leaders get together and write polemics against anything that looks like live Bible Christianity! Jesus is alive! In that case, there will be signs of it somewhere! Thank God we see it in the world-wide Charismatic revival. There will be more yet! Because Jesus is alive, deadness in church worship is a sin. Church architecture, fine art and professional music-making, as well as socio-political engagement are no substitute for life. Christ gave us the plainest expectations of manifestations of Divine power and might, with signs, wonders, healings, deliverances, forgiveness, abundant life and apostolic faith. People want what they see in the New Testament, spiritual reality and wonder. Until then, of course, churches will be unattended. The public have voted with their feet against the misrepresentation of Christ in a moribund powerless religion."⁶

Bittlinger and Bonnke's attitudes demonstrate the difficulty of finding ground for any type of ecclesiastical reconciliation between conciliar and neopentecostal confessions. In essence, they have accused one another of heresy; not a shred of Bittlinger's open-mindedness nor Bonnke's compassion for "the lost" is in sight. Until there is a true willingness to hear the accusations and concerns of the other side, there seems to be little promise of neopentecostal participation in the wider ecumenical movement.

Charges like Bonnke's, which question the conciliar churches' foundational Christian commitment, ruffle some ecclesiastical feathers, yet they do not appear to be entirely misguided. Questions concerning the christocentricity of the ecumenical movement have been raised, not only by neo/pentecostals, but from within the movement itself. In a 1984 critique, Newbigin asks:

"May it not be that the faltering of the movement for unity in the past two decades has been partly due to the fact that we have not sufficiently emphasised what we may call its interior dimension, this total commitment to Jesus which belongs to the most secret centre of our being?...The outward expression of this inward relationship will be witness to the sufficiency and finality of Christ in every human relationship. Timidity about the claims of Christ to be the Savior of the world (and there is a lot of this timidity in our churches) cannot co-exist with a deep and costly commitment to unity. It is only if Jesus is indeed supreme above every other name or power or principle or programme that the unity of his people is really essential...there can be no movement towards unity except on the basis of a deep, personal commitment to Christ."⁷

This internal analysis adds a note of credibility to the existing pentecostal (and evangelical/fundamentalist) criticism of the WCC. What pentecostals and other non-conciliar churches have suspected, Newbigin has articulated: that a weak witness to the saving power of Jesus Christ leads to disunity, and that personal commitment to Christ is often over-looked, or perhaps never made, in favour of a corporate commitment.⁸

There is, nevertheless, no room for rock-throwing. Those satisfied to remain beyond the conciliar church movement may indeed have a strong Christology and a dynamic pneumatology, but coupled with this theological strength is a strident and unlovely arrogance which mars both their beauty and their witness. Uncharitableness is the historic weakness of the newest expressions of the Christian Church, and this weakness is apparent in neo/pentecostal attitudes and utterances concerning the older denominations. The neopentecostal's enthusiastic efforts to fulfil Christ's command to his disciples to "go and make disciples" offers an important model for conciliar churches. However, Christ also made clear his desire for unity within the Church, not only through his high-priestly prayer, but also in the new commandment which he gave: "Love one another." The Church is called to manifest this love among Christians as one of the distinctive marks of discipleship. In this regard, the neo/pentecostals might benefit from the model of the conciliar churches.

Levels of Neopentecostal Ecumenism

Surprisingly, in the literature of our case study groups there is almost no intentional reference to the topic of ecumenism. At best, only passing reference is made to the inter-church relations maintained by our case study groups; at worst, in the case of Rhema, there is no mention at all. However, in gleaning both primary and secondary sources, we find that informal links make up a significant portion of these groups' inter-church activity.

We begin with the Deeper Life Church. Deeper Life has formal ties with the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, as well as with the larger Christian Association of Nigeria (CAoN), which it joined in 1988. Deeper Life's affiliation with an ecumenical body such as CAoN is especially remarkable; founded in 1976, CAoN includes a diverse membership including Roman Catholic, Protestant, and indigenous churches. In identifying with the CAoN, in particular, Deeper Life has demonstrated that its exclusivist stance has softened with age.⁹ Detailing this trend, Kumuyi told Isaacson in 1988:

"Most of the time now we will be mild...and at least the people in Lagos know that we accept other people as Christians. They knew that from the onset because I would say, 'We have different convictions, but we are all children of God. We believe that this is what we ought to do, this is our ministry and our vision. We should be strong in our conviction, and yet put the best construction on what

other people are doing.' I believe that in the love and grace of God everything will eventually be cleared up as an answer to the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. We still help the churches... when the Christian Association of Nigeria had a problem in 1987 we gave N100.000. We also printed 500.000 of our own tracts for them which they requested, and we printed free of charge. Last year (1987) I think we gave N10.000 to PFN (Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria)..."¹⁰

The tenor of this comment reflects the confidence and increased maturity of a neopentecostal fellowship which has grown into a successful church. This comment also reflects similarly on the confidence and increased maturity of its founder, William Kumuyi. His church is a large and nationally-known member of Nigeria's diverse ecclesiastical community, from which vantage point the Deeper Life Church can safely and generously offer its services to the pentecostal and Protestant communities of Nigeria.

By its very constitution declaring itself a multi-denominational and multi-ethnic organisation, YWAM is, in a limited way, inherently ecumenical. Its inter-organisational interest appears mostly evangelical. These largely evangelical leanings are reflected by YWAM's participation at the second Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation held in Manila in 1989. Further, YWAM has been negotiating for membership with the Evangelical Foreign Mission Association (EFMA) of the United States; the EFMA is characterised by its conservative evangelical membership.¹¹ Despite YWAM's pentecostal origins, there is no mention of its affiliation with a larger pentecostal association; the mission did, however, participate in the pentecostal/charismatic conferences held in New Orleans in 1986-1987.

How YWAM actually relates to existing churches in its ministry settings is more difficult to ascertain. In print, YWAM sounds very willing to co-operate with all churches and groups at the local level. The mission affirms:

"...the importance of the local church. We seek to work in unity with God's people from all denominations and confessions. We seek to work in partnership with other Christian groups and churches for the fulfilment of the Great Commission. (Philippians 1.3; 1 Thessalonians 1.2-10; Ephesians 3.8,9,10)"¹²

Cunningham further articulates the importance of co-operation and unity among Christians in mission; he writes in *Winning, God's Way*:

"The Word of God in Ephesians 4 tells us we need to be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit until someday we all attain to the unity of the faith (verses 2-13). We must agree on the basics-the divinity and Lordship of Christ, the Bible as the Word of God, the work of the cross, and other main tenets of the faith. But where we disagree, we must leave it to God and keep our hearts right. Our responsibility is to do everything we can to maintain the spirit of unity-the very spirit of Jesus (John 17)...We need one another, in very real ways. It goes beyond an attitude of heart. We need to pursue co-operation in practical ways if the body of Christ is going to fulfill the Great Commission. We must communicate and complement one another wherever possible, doing away with duplication of effort...Gods' Spirit is being poured out on many people from diverse backgrounds, who are not

being united organizationally, but simply in Jesus. This is His process of blending."¹³

YWAM's affirmation of seeking local partnership in church planting ventures and Cunningham's exhortation to spiritual and organisational co-operation appear to harmonise with the WCC call for "unity in mission".¹⁴ Theologically, then, YWAM's intentions read clearly.

Assessments of YWAM's actual on-site relationships with ecclesiastical communities are limited. One hindrance to such critique is YWAM's structure; it operates from 200 nearly autonomous bases world-wide. Stoll's brief critique is one of the few outside treatments of YWAM's activities. In the Latin American context, he notes that:

"To this decentralized structure was sometimes attributed the misunderstanding and conflict which YWAM's hit-and-run ministry could leave in its wake. In Guatemala, the 1983 arrival of the YWAM's good ship *Anastasis*, loaded with relief supplies and hundreds of short-termers, convinced Catholics that they were being invaded by an army of sects. According to YWAM, it sent almost two thousand short-term missionaries into Guatemala over the next two years. The group's methods also aroused objections from some of the local churches and missions it said it was helping. When its visiting teams made cultural and political blunders, such as spilling out right-wing North American attitudes in door-to-door evangelism, resident brethren took the blame."¹⁵

From Stoll's comments we see that YWAM's official willingness to co-operate with local churches is sometimes hampered, in reality, by its volunteers. And yet, with a large number of its volunteers coming from North America's evangelical and charismatic churches, YWAM cannot claim to be surprised by the situations described by Stoll. In fact, from Cunningham's alleged alliance with certain religious right groups in the USA, the religious and political conservatism exuded by YWAM in Latin America may be less than accidental.¹⁶ However, a greater breadth of research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

Rhema USA makes no reference to its inter-church relations in its publications. *The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* reports that Rhema USA has founded an organisation called the Rhema Ministerial Association International which, in 1988, involved 525 churches; the member churches' pastors and/or youth ministers are likely to be Rhema graduates. The fact that Rhema USA appears to affiliate only with daughter churches is a strong indication both of its lack of interest in the wider ecumenical community and of its lack of theological tolerance.

In South Africa, however, the Rhema churches have formed a slightly broader alliance with other neopentecostal and charismatic churches. Rhema South Africa's Ray McCauley and two other ministers, Edmund Roebert and Nickie van der Westhuizen, founded a South

African association of new charismatic churches in 1985 called the International Fellowship of Christian Churches (IFCC). It is the largest such grouping of new charismatics in South Africa; at the end of 1986 its membership comprised 216 churches and 110.000 adherents.¹⁷ Neither the American nor the South African Rhema churches appear to have any formal affiliations beyond the alliances just mentioned.

Reinhard Bonnke's ministry, Christ for All Nations (CfAN) appears to have no formal ecumenical links. In each issue of his periodical, *Revival Report* there is a statement which reads:

"Christ for All Nations is an interdenominational evangelistic organisation working with all Full Gospel churches and fellowships".

CfAN defines full gospel as the: "demonstration and ministry of the work of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit by the Church today as described in Luke Chapter 4". The organisation states that it is affiliated with Evangelical Alliance and Charismatic/Pentecostal churches; further all ministers and trustees associated with CfAN are accredited with recognised churches.¹⁸ There is, however, no indication of its formal affiliation with a larger umbrella organisation.

While many of his crusade reports mention the number of churches supporting a particular crusade, very few mention the number of *denominations* represented. For example, the 1988 Accra crusade had 60 sponsoring churches; the 1989 Bamenda, Cameroon crusade, 65 churches; and the 1990 Jos crusade, 250 churches. Only the article reporting on the 1988 Nairobi crusade mentions that the 211 supporting churches represented 45 denominations. Why? One reason may be lazy reporting, but another reason may be that the number of denominations represented would not put the ministry into a favourable light.

In any case, Bonnke views co-operation with local churches in a crusade location as imperative to his ministry. Bonnke articulates this vital relationship:

"The evangelist is a gift to the church (Ephesians 4.11) for the world (Luke 24.47). The true evangelist is not interested in building his own empire...his work only makes sense in connection with the building of the local churches of Jesus Christ. Everything he does should have this as its goal: that people should be brought within the church, where the living word of God is preached. The greatest and even the most successful crusades almost become meaningless when they are not conducted within the context of the church and its growth. Crusades without local churches are only some kind of show, because the divine purpose is missing."¹⁹

Two observations can be made at this point. The first is that acknowledging, respecting, and working with the local churches as a part of a crusade is a giant step forward in the theology of crusade evangelism. Real co-operation with local churches is not a historical characteristic of crusade evangelism. Even if Bonnke's crusades only bring together like-minded churches, it is still a significant improvement in co-operation; although this co-operation may seem elementary, it is not to be taken for granted. Second and relatedly, in temporarily consolidating local churches for a crusade, Bonnke may be providing a catalyst for future ecumenical activity in that particular location. Informally and indirectly, then, Bonnke may be promoting wider Christian unity through his preaching crusades. However, inter-church co-operation, in and of itself, is not a significant concern of his ministry.

From the speakers featured at Bonnke's annual Euro-Fire conferences, we see Bonnke co-operating with the world-wide neo/pentecostal and charismatic community. At the conferences held in Birmingham in 1988 and Lisbon in 1990, the speakers included Ray McCauley (Rhema), Benny Hinn (neopentecostal), Jack Hayford (Foursquare Gospel), Colin Urquart (Anglican), and John Lancaster (Elim).²⁰ It appears that Bonnke's definition of ecumenism will be restricted to those that are, at the very least, open to a full-gospel theology.

We conclude that there is a restricted range of formal ecumenical affiliations among our neopentecostal case study groups. The Deeper Life Church appears to be the most widely connected as it is officially linked with both pentecostals and members of the larger conciliar community. Rhema's associations appear the most restricted as it is in formal communion only with like-minded neopentecostals. YWAM and CfAN have almost no formal inter-organisational links, but this may be due to factors other than organisational exclusivity. The constituency and size of the former and the ministry of the latter may partially explain this situation. More important to organisations like YWAM and CfAN is the link which they maintain with those local churches which fund their ventures; however informal, such ecclesiastical networks are vital to both organisations' existence.

While our case study groups have few to no formal inter-church affiliations, there is evidence that they all co-operate at an informal level. The best place to look for evidence of informal neopentecostal co-operation is at the national and international Holy Spirit conferences. These experientially-centered gatherings have been very popular with neopentecostals since the 1970s and are symbolic of what neopentecostals would call inter-church fellowship. The first and largest such conference was held in Kansas City in July 1977. One-half of the 50,000 participants were Catholic, with Protestant charismatics and pentecostals making up the other half. Similar and subsequent conferences, the North

American Congresses on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelisation, were held in 1986-1987 and 1990 in New Orleans and Indianapolis, respectively.²¹ A glance through the speakers' schedule, as well as a perusal of the book stalls, at these conferences is a good way to view the web of neopentecostalism's ecclesiastical relationships.

Reinhard Bonnke and Ray McCauley of Rhema (more than Kenneth Hagin) are regular speakers at these conferences, which is indicative of a certain species of limited interest in inter-church concerns. Bonnke spoke at the New Orleans conference in 1987 and both Bonnke and McCauley spoke at a similar conference in Phoenix in 1989. Because both men are dynamic and persuasive personalities, they make good conference speakers.

The unity promoted through these conferences is a unity centred around participatory worship. People from a variety of pentecostal, neopentecostal, and charismatic traditions come together to experience their shared faith through elements such as conversions, baptisms in the Holy Spirit, prayer, healings, and music. The frequent reference made to the music which is sung and exchanged at these conferences indicates that it is also a most important element.²² In fact, it may not be too much to suggest that teaching new music, rather than reaffirming theological truths, takes precedence at such conferences. The end is to have participated in, not merely attended, a Holy Spirit conference.

We have seen that neopentecostals do enjoy a degree of informal ecumenism, but that they have few formal ecumenical ties. The silence of our case study groups on this topic may be an indication that, to them, the wider conciliar movement has no contemporary relevance. Why might the conciliar movement be irrelevant? What are the factors which hinder neopentecostal participation in this movement? Both historical and theological insights offer some of the answers.

Reasons for Low Ecumenical Interest

From neither a practical, a historical, nor a theological vantage point are there compelling reasons for neopentecostal participation in the larger ecumenical movement. Practically, the neopentecostals seem to embody the American maxim, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Neo/pentecostals are riding a tide of increasing growth, prosperity and influence, while their WCC counterparts in Europe and North America, especially, find themselves in exactly the reverse position. While many WCC churches *in the two-thirds world* are growing at rates comparable to neo/pentecostal churches, most WCC churches in the west are in unprecedented decline. However, since practically, the WCC's balance of power (in terms of finances and academic centres, though not constituency) still remains tipped in favour of the

west, neopentecostals are understandably suspicious of the WCC's agenda. The neopentecostals are naturally unwilling to alter a successful formula and, in practical terms, this is only good common sense. It would be foolish of neo/pentecostals to change an agenda of priorities and methods which are producing the desired result.

There are not only practical reasons for the reserved neo/pentecostal response to ecumenical overtures; there are historical reasons as well. Historically, world-wide pentecostalism has been characterised by persecution, ridicule, and, at best, indifference. Ironically, the sharpest criticism has come from Holiness and fundamentalist churches, those which are nearest to pentecostals in theology and practice.²³ Pentecostals have been labeled "Holy Rollers" and their theology dismissed as heretical in works such as B. B. Warfield's 1918 *Counterfeit Miracles* and John McArthur's 1978 *The Charismatics*. It was not until the 1940s, in the United States, that pentecostalism was even taken seriously as a part of the Church.²⁴ Therefore, it is only relatively recently that neo/pentecostals have been deemed worthy as partners in the ecumenical movement.

The conciliar churches have not done a sudden about-face in their estimation of the neo/pentecostals. In fact, in the early 1960s the charismatic renewal raised a spate of opposition from within the historic Protestant confessions. Because of their similar theological emphases and their lack of ecclesiastical connections, neopentecostals could be considered twice as suspicious as mainline charismatics. So historically, there appear to be more reasons for neo/pentecostal isolation than participation in the wider ecumenical movement.

Wider ecclesiastical recognition posed a new challenge for American pentecostals: how to maintain their distinctively pentecostal emphases as members of larger ecumenical bodies. Some pentecostals point to 1941, the year the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) issued its invitation for membership, as the date from which several of pentecostalism's distinctive features have been steadily eroded. For example, where once pentecostalism was known for its pacifism and visible support of women in ministry, its views now reflect much more mainstream American evangelicalism.²⁵ However, that pentecostalism's more evangelical perspective can be explained entirely by its affiliation with the NAE is dubious; the pentecostal church itself needs to be ultimately responsible for its doctrinal changes.

With a handful of exceptions, mostly from the two-thirds world, pentecostals have shunned the larger ecumenical movement. That they have done so can be explained in part by their early rejection by mainline Protestantism. Later, when recognised as Christians, pentecostals tended to identify and affiliate with evangelicals, most of whom ignored the ecumenical movement. However, theological constraint is at the core of the pentecostals'

rejection of the conciliar church movement. Pentecostals, and now neopentecostals as well, generally fear the academic, liberal theology and formalism of liturgical communions, which contrast with their less academic theology and spontaneous worship; as d'Epinay asked in 1969 "are ecumenical relations possible between very active and silent Christians?"²⁶

Through the century several ecumenically-minded pentecostal leaders have attempted, and largely failed, to convince the world-wide pentecostal movement of the value of interacting with the Church or the advantages of visible ecclesiastical unity.²⁷ Donald Gee, editor of *Pentecost* from 1947-1966 and David du Plessis, a participant in many WCC and Vatican dialogues, constantly exhorted their fellow pentecostals to become involved in ecumenical ventures. As early as 1961, Gee wrote:

"We are thrilled at what God is doing these days in bringing so many hundreds of our fellow-believers in the older denominations into Pentecostal blessing. This grace is being bestowed conspicuously, though by no means exclusively, among our friends of the Anglican Communion. They are speaking with new tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance, even as we. Let us unitedly worship God for this and other manifestations of His Spirit."²⁸

Today, Cecil Robeck, Jr. stands out among pentecostals for his efforts to reconcile pentecostal and ecumenical interests. However, the neo/pentecostal response to the ecumenical movement remains mostly cool.

Theologically, there appears to be a slight hint of ecumenical unity between neo/pentecostals, evangelicals, and conciliar Christians. In comparing statements taken from the WCC's 1987 Stuttgart Consultation on Evangelism and the evangelicals' Lausanne Covenant with those taken from the doctrinal statements and writings of our neopentecostal groups we find a considerable amount of common theological ground. As we have some knowledge of a neopentecostal missiology from Chapter Three, we present now for comparison the following WCC and Lausanne statements on the nature and task of evangelism. In the WCC's Stuttgart document we read:

"The Church is sent into the world to call people and nations to repentance, to announce forgiveness of sin and a new beginning in relations with God and with neighbours through Jesus Christ. This evangelistic calling has a new urgency today."

"The proclamation of the Gospel includes an invitation to recognise and accept in a personal decision the saving lordship of Christ. It is the announcement of a personal encounter, mediated by the Holy Spirit, with the living Christ, receiving his forgiveness and making a personal acceptance of the call to discipleship and a new life of service."

"God calls all believers to participate in the evangelistic task. Men and women, clergy and laity, young and old—all are one in Christ, one in the Spirit (Galatians 3.28; I Corinthians 12.13), all are proclaimers, in word and act, of the Good News they together share."²⁹

We expect even more common theological ground between evangelicals and neopentecostals. In the Lausanne Covenant we read:

"To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, as so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world."³⁰

In comparing these statements with the neopentecostal statements found in Chapter Three nothing appears amiss. In fact, both the WCC and Lausanne statements affirm the proclamation of the Christian gospel in bold, uncluttered language. Yet, although the personalized language of salvation and missions found in these statements is not contrary to neopentecostal doctrine, neopentecostals see the assertions themselves as incomplete. Implied in much of the neopentecostal literature is the belief that those churches which do not preach the "full gospel", including signs and wonders, are not only dead, but unfaithful.³¹ Anything less than their interpretation of the "full gospel", neopentecostals believe, is a truncated version of the gospel.

The phenomenal growth rate of neo/pentecostalism is called into play here, as evidence of the superior quality of their theology. It must be admitted that one reason the WCC is taking them seriously is that their increasing presence demands attention. Another reason is that western conciliar churches, with their overall rate of decline, are beginning to give a grudging but genuine respect to neo/pentecostals, sensing that perhaps neo/pentecostals have something to offer WCC members. Naturally, the neo/pentecostals sense the old paternalism, and remembering the ostracism which their doctrines and practices had earlier elicited from the mainline churches, it is not without satisfaction that the neo/pentecostals now cite their rapid growth rate as "proof" of their theological superiority, and indeed, of their orthodoxy.

The neopentecostal criticism of conciliar theology is somewhat amplified by the theological concerns which have been raised by those within the ecumenical movement. Raymond Fung, editor of the WCC's *A Monthly Letter on Evangelism*, posed the following question in the July/August 1990 issue: Why are "radical" Christians ineffectual evangelists? Fung went on to suggest the following reasons for their impotency as evangelists: one, time or the lack of time; two, radical Christians in their dealing with people in the community tend to be shy about words such as "salvation" and "Jesus"; three, the radical Christians' desire that others may also come to believe is not strong enough to be clear-they send out mixed signals; four, the radical Christians' favourite word is "issues"; and five, radical Christians are not radical enough-they are too comfortable in their little ghettos, with their radical rhetoric.³²

Fung's second and third reasons appear to be associated with an impoverished conciliar theology. When Christians can no longer assert unhesitatingly that Jesus Christ died to set both themselves and others free from sin and compulsive self-gratification, the Church is in spiritual crisis. Perhaps WCC member clergy are lacking those adequate and transmissible spiritual truths which, if intact, would build their parishioners into potent evangelists.³³ Fung's second and third reasons strongly intimate that this is the case. With reflections from ecumenists like Fung that within the conciliar churches the theological heart of the gospel has sometimes been shelved in the quest for visible unity and societal justice, can we fully fault neopentecostals for their indifference to the wider ecumenical movement? That which the conciliar churches could model for neopentecostalism, for example extensive social concern and empathetic listening skills, risk never being transmitted unless they are accompanied by an effective evangelistic voice.

There is another, very pragmatic, reason why neopentecostals have chosen to remain outside the Church. While there is some overlap in their agendas, the conciliar and neopentecostal churches order their priorities very differently. For example, while both groups will have evangelism on their agendas, the priority it assumes can differ greatly. Conciliar Christians generally do not unequivocally uphold evangelism as the highest priority of the Church; the Church is to evangelise but it is defined by more than just evangelism. Newbigin writes:

"I have defined missions as 'particular enterprises within the total mission which have the primary intention of bringing into existence a Christian presence in a milieu where previously there was no such presence or where such presence was ineffective'. The important word in that definition is 'intention'. The whole life of the church-worship, fellowship, preaching, teaching, service-has a missionary *dimension*, but not all has a missionary *intention*. When, following the death of Stephen, the Jerusalem church was attacked and dispersed, the scattering of believers produced an enormous missionary expansion (Acts 8), but there was no missionary intention. On the other hand, when, moved by the Spirit, the church in

Antioch laid hands on Saul and Barnabas and 'sent them off' to preach among the gentiles, the missionary *intention* was central. Here is, one may say, the central New Testament paradigm for missions as I have defined them. The Antioch church was a itself a witnessing and rapidly growing community (Acts 11.19-26). It was also a compassionate church, responding generously and promptly to the needs of the hungry (11.27-30). But the Spirit did not allow it to be content with this. It was to set apart a team and send a team called for the specific purpose of taking the gospel to unreached peoples. This team was and remained a part of the church, but it was set apart with a specific missionary intention...What I do find in the New Testament, and this is very important, is a great variety of forms of *ministry*. In particular it does seem that the early church acknowledged two forms of ministry: the settled ministry of bishops (elders) and deacons, and the mobile ministry of apostles, prophets, and evangelists. These are all listed as part of the ministry of the one body, but they have different roles."³⁴

On the other hand, neopentecostal ecclesiology appears to be defined by evangelism; the church *is* evangelism. A YWAM author writes:

"At the Day of Judgment, the people we have won to the Lord and discipled, and not the church buildings we have built, or the programs we have run, will stand as testimonies to how we lived our Christian lives. Yes, we need buildings and programs and money, but we must never lose sight of the fact that they are only means in the cause of evangelism and discipleship."³⁵

The definition and priority of "evangelism" determine how the Christian perceives and acts in the world. For neopentecostals, the number of people that "have been won to the Lord and discipled", or in other words, the number of people that have been converted and trained in the Christian faith, is their ultimate concern. That energy which is not actively channelled into "winning converts and making disciples" is seen as wasted. From Newbigin's perspective, the evangelistic arm of the neopentecostal church is strengthened at the expense of its settled ministry.

Those beyond the neo/pentecostal tradition will normally define and prioritise evangelism in larger and different ways. Presence, not just proclamation is essential to their definition of evangelism. In fact, the ministry of a local church is seen to be enhanced by this understanding of evangelism; in demonstrating concern for a community's affairs, Christians have a more natural entree for evangelism. Therefore, the settled ministry of the Church cannot be abandoned for the sake of proclamation evangelism; both are components of the one organism. We note that because neopentecostal ecclesiology is determined by little other than world evangelisation, many items on the conciliar churches' agendas are of little consequence to neopentecostals.

Of all the ecumenical concerns, inter-faith dialogue is probably the least relevant to neopentecostals; indeed, it is virtually unique to the ecumenical agenda. No reference to this type of dialogue is mentioned in the literature of the case study groups; only the goal of

evangelism governs any mention of other religious traditions. YWAM's strategies for evangelising Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus illustrates the neopentecostal attitude toward other religions; people of other faiths are viewed foremost as potential converts to the Christian faith. For example, on evangelising Buddhists, YWAM's Moala claims that:

"God is going to do mighty things in the Buddhist world, and He wants us, His church, to participate with Him in it. If we will rise up and take the opportunities that exist, God will go before us. We need to start targeting nations in the Buddhist world for prayer and evangelism, nations such as Bhutan, where there are only about 3000 known Christians in a total population of 2.5 million people, or Sikkim, the tiny Indian state located between Bhutan and Nepal, which is almost totally unevangelised. If we will do our part, God will work with us in seeing the Buddhist world evangelized."³⁶

In reference to two-thirds world pentecostals, Grant McClung, Jr. notes that:

"As a populist movement centred on the person of Christ, pentecostals in the Two-Thirds World should not be expected to jump on the bandwagon of interreligious dialogue."³⁷

The neo/pentecostal attitude regarding peoples of other faiths is made very clear; people of other faiths are viewed as those who need to be "won for Christ". Christ, not discussion, is the means for conversion.

While neopentecostals do not share most contemporary conciliar Christian concerns, they do share their historical concerns. In comparing the issues of the earliest Protestant ecumenical gatherings with those of present day neopentecostal gatherings we gain another clue as to why there is little neopentecostal interest in dialogue. The 1910 World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh was principally concerned with the issue of strategy; the question of the hour was *how mission*?³⁸ The second conference held in Jerusalem in 1928 was concerned with the issues of secularism and syncretism; the question of this hour was *for what reason mission*?³⁹ So we see that the concerns of strategy, secularism, and syncretism dominated the agenda of the first two ecumenical gatherings of the twentieth century.

In comparing the issues of the Edinburgh and Jerusalem conferences with the issues of the neopentecostal gatherings of the past two decades we see a considerable overlap. It is evident from its title that the North American Congresses on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelisation (1986-87 and 1990) included the topic of evangelistic strategy. We observe, as well, that strategy and secularism were concerns of the 1989 neo/pentecostal "Take It By Force" conference held in Phoenix, Arizona.⁴⁰ We see, then, that evangelism, strategy, and secularism are concerns of the neopentecostal missionary movement.

The point of this comparison is to note the similarity of concerns expressed by these two missionary movements in their youthful state. Those issues which dominated the agendas of Edinburgh and Jerusalem are now prominent on the agendas of neopentecostal missionary gatherings; clearly, the concerns of evangelism, strategy, and secularism are foundational elements of a nascent missionary movement. As it matures, the neopentecostal missionary movement may increasingly reflect some of the more refined issues of the present day conciliar church movement.

We conclude, then, with the observation that neopentecostal churches are not *necessarily* lacking in ecumenical energy. Neopentecostalism is a relatively new religious phenomenon with a youthful immaturity; this means that its ecumenical focus is more likely to be fixed on issues such as strategy and secularism. In the following decades it may be that we will see an evolution of the neopentecostal agenda just as we have seen the evolution of the WCC agenda from Edinburgh to San Antonio. However, it must be admitted that the chances of such an evolution are slim. The historical precedent of the pentecostal movement's hesitant and limited ecumenical vision does not bode well for the future of neopentecostal participation in the ecumenical movement. Further, neopentecostalism's highest priority, evangelism, is not similarly defined by many WCC members, especially in the west. Until and unless they see the advantages of visible Church unity, neopentecostal churches will function like their pentecostal parents, outside the larger ecumenical movement, for historical, theological, and pragmatic reasons.

Diverse Foundations for Church Unity

That the unity of the Church is desirable is unanimously upheld by nearly all expressions of the Christian faith.⁴¹ Although John 17 records Jesus' prayer that "they be perfectly one", different interpretations of the *nature of Christian oneness* keep apart various church traditions. We see at least three types of unity advocated within the Church today: ecclesial unity-the visible unity of Church; theological unity-the unity of doctrine; and pneumatological unity-the unity of the Spirit.

The first type of unity, ecclesial unity, is usually associated with the conciliar churches. Visible, organizational unity and its corollary, mission cooperation, have been the stated aims of the WCC since its beginnings in 1948. Both are still concerns in the 1990s, as demonstrated by voices from within the WCC. Lesslie Newbigin writes:

"I take it for granted that unity cannot be something merely invisible and spiritual, or something which is expressed only by occasional gestures. I take it that unity in Christ is a kind of mutual solidarity which requires all the members to take the same

kind of responsibility for one another as is implied in Paul's metaphor of the body. The solidarity is indeed a critical solidarity. It involves and requires freedom for mutual correction and criticism, as well as for mutual sustaining and comforting."⁴²

As well, we read in the WCC's 1990 San Antonio Report:

"The present ecumenical movement came into being out of the conviction that the division of Christians is a scandal and an impediment to the witness of the church. There is a growing awareness among the churches today of the inextricable relationship between Christian unity and missionary calling, between ecumenism and evangelisation...We believe that any evangelism that does not promote good relationships with other Christians in the community must inevitably be called into question. Our witness may deteriorate into counterwitness, thereby in effect denying the authenticity of the faith experience of other Christians."⁴³

Evangelical and fundamentalist churches appear more concerned about theological unity than organizational unity. In these churches, doctrinal unity forms the only foundation for true ecumenism. Paragraph seven of the Lausanne Covenant is a good summary of the evangelical emphasis on theological unity. Notice the emphasis on truth:

"We affirm that the church's visible unity in truth is God's purpose. Evangelism also summons us to unity, because our oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our gospel of reconciliation. We recognize, however, that organizational unity may take many forms and does not necessarily forward evangelism. Yet we who share the same biblical faith should be closely united in fellowship, work and witness. We confess that our testimony has sometimes been marred by sinful individualism and needless duplication. We pledge ourselves to seek a deeper unity in truth, worship, holiness and mission. We urge the development of regional and functional cooperation for the furtherance of the church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience."⁴⁴

Neither organizational nor theological unity is as central a concern to pentecostals as is spiritual and experiential unity. Pentecostals believe that any Christian can be filled and empowered by the Holy Ghost and that this experience can unify believers like nothing else.⁴⁵ Pomerville elaborates on the unifying effect the Holy Spirit had at the first Pentecost:

"Pentecost...had epochal meaning; it marked an end of the age of national particularism and the return of God's redemptive purpose to the nations. The ethnic diversity brought about by the confusion of languages was reversed at Pentecost. Through the miracle of languages God began to restore the unity of the race which was lost at Babel. Pentecost was both a symbol of that unifying work of God and the actual beginning of the unification of the race. *The Spirit was the agent of this restoration of unity.* The role of the Spirit in His mission, breaking through the barriers which separate people, points to the importance of pneumatology for ecumenism."⁴⁶

Neo/pentecostals believe that the same Spirit which united a heterogeneous Christian population at the first Pentecost unites Christians today. The experience of Holy Spirit baptism is seen as an effective agent for Christian unity:

"When pentecostals speak of Christian unity their immediate understanding is that Christian unity, genuine *koinonia*, or true 'ecumenism', is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit which presupposes a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Unity is something which *exists* between individuals as a result of that relationship, and it needs merely to be recognized. It is organic, internal, and spiritual. As such, it is for the most part invisible...Pentecostals would argue, however, that their 'experience' is truly an ecumenical force, that their 'movement' is a form of 'grass-roots' ecumenism."⁴⁷

Participants in the charismatic renewal, many of whom belong to WCC churches, echo a similar theme of spiritual unity. One such observation concerning the ecumenical significance of the charismatic renewal is recorded as follows:

"Since the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of unity, emphasis on the Holy Spirit will lead to a renewed search for Christian unity, based not so much on doctrine or church order, but on shared life in the Holy Spirit. The charismatic movement *is* an ecumenical movement!"⁴⁸

The charismatic concern expressed here indicates that a broader interpretation of unity is circulating within the WCC. Since the charismatic constituency of the WCC sees the value of both visible and spiritual unity, this subgroup has potential as a catalyst for drawing together the various factions of the Christian Church. However, while the renewal did engender feelings and expressions of unity during its peak in the late 1970s and early 1980s, it has not been as substantial a unifying force as many hoped it would be.⁴⁹

Ecumenical Mission Activity

In an attempt to rectify the long history of western spiritual imperialism, conciliar Christians now strongly advocate the principle of local churches taking the primary responsibility for local evangelism. While outside missionary assistance is sometimes necessary, and even desirable, it must be co-ordinated and carried out in partnership with an existing local church or ecclesiastical community. Most conciliar Christians believe that missionaries are no longer free to set out on independent evangelistic ventures; such an approach is anachronistic. Enrique Dussell writes:

"In the last half-millennium the expansion of Christianity has come to an end. Nevertheless, the mission in Africa still remains to be finished and that in Asia has yet to grow. On the most populated continent (Asia) Christianity is a very minor presence...In any case it is present enough by way of the churches which are sufficiently well established in the national histories. The age of the mission *towards the outside* has ended with the second millennium even though fundamentalist sects continue in this forwarding-pushing spirit."⁵⁰

Curtailling independence in world mission need not eliminate the missionary activity of churches and para-church organisations. Rather, conciliar Christians insist that all missionary efforts carried out by any church or group must be in conjunction with a national church or

organisation at the other end. The Stuttgart Consultation on Evangelism remarks on the role it sees for para-church organisations in evangelism:

"We give thanks for the dedicated individuals and the stewardship of resources in organizations and agencies which work to support the churches and serve the world in the name of Christ. We greatly value the work done by these bodies when they act after consultation, and in conjunction with the churches and communities of Christ's people in local areas, in such a way as to build up the sign of Christ's unifying love, and to empower the actions of Christ's people there. We hear the cries of pain of churches and communities of Christ's people in local areas when some outside agencies, driven by the ardour of their convictions, have acted-in the opinion of some local churches-without consultation, to the detriment of the work and vision of these churches. Such action does not strengthen, but weakens the credibility and witness of the Church."⁵¹

The conciliar churches' concern for interdependence in mission activity is particularly relevant to the independent church planting efforts of both the Deeper Life and Rhema churches. Because of its initial reputation for "sheep stealing" (luring into one's congregation members from other churches), the Deeper Life Church is especially vulnerable on this issue. "Sheep stealing" is evidence that a church is not likely to be working with, but against, other local churches.⁵² Unlike the Deeper Life Church, Rhema does not, officially, plant churches bearing its same name; it appears that any Rhema church planting schemes are left up to the graduates of its Bible Training Centres. The three churches and one Bible school established among the Choco Indians of Panama by Rhema graduates, Dennis and Jeanne Cook, illustrate the kind of independent missionary activity associated with Rhema.⁵³ The intent and actions of Rhema and Deeper Life illustrate why there remains conciliar church concern about autonomous mission activity. There was no mention in the Rhema report from Panama of any other churches among the Choco; is there really no existing church among the Choco? Further, often implicit in "sheep stealing" is the notion that the thief's theology is purer, which is supposed to justify the tactic. Clearly, neither implication benefits the unity of the Church.

"The greatest threat to any future revival does not come from the world but from sectarianism, old and new. It is impossible to have fellowship in the Gospel with a group which believes that to move with God is to move with them, because, if they think that, they are under a logical obligation to persuade members of other groups to join them. So people are turned from the cause of Christ to the cause of a movement, from fighting the common enemy to conflict with one another."⁵⁴

Neopentecostalism's spiritual aloofness is another concern of the wider Church. In the words of E. L. Stockwell "there is a temptation that those who are 'possessed by the Spirit' may conduct themselves as if in fact they possess the Spirit."⁵⁵ In the literature of all our case study groups except YWAM we, indeed, gain the impression that anything less than a 'full gospel' pneumatology is an inherently inferior theology of the Spirit. Non-neo/pentecostal churches are convinced that when neo/pentecostal churches act as if they have a monopoly, or at least an edge, on the Holy Spirit's guidance and gifts it cripples hopes for Church unity:

"The sense of certainty or ecstasy they experience leads sometimes to the conviction that God's will is crystal clear to them, a certainty that excludes fellow-Christians whose understanding of God's will may be somewhat different though equally sincere and worthy of respect. The result is that potential unity is endangered and the freedom of the Spirit is limited to a particular viewpoint."⁵⁶

Similar warnings of the dangers of neo/pentecostalism's distancing attitude have also come from within the pentecostal movement itself. One such critic, Cecil Robeck, Jr. comments:

"Yet, if we are, in fact, members of the one Church of Jesus Christ, for us to criticize in the other a point of weakness (especially if we consider it to be a strength to which we can bear unique witness), and at the same time to refuse to participate with the other to help it overcome its weaknesses, is to disobey our Lord."⁵⁷

Robeck's critique is good, but it is over-simplified. Essentially, Robeck underestimates the breadth of the conciliar church weaknesses to which neo/pentecostals point. Pneumatology is merely the tip of the ecumenical iceberg; differences and misunderstandings between neo/pentecostals and non-pentecostals can be identified in nearly every theological category. This once again brings to our attention the extent and seriousness of the issues which hinder the Church from its fuller ecumenical expression. It is no inconsiderable task to assist another part of the Church to "overcome its weaknesses" particularly when that other part does not appreciate its shortcomings.

Conclusion

We conclude the chapter with an observation and a suggestion. The observation is a reflection on a comment made by the pentecostal Robeck. Robeck believes that fear, reinforced by self-righteous stereotypes, misunderstandings based upon partial perceptions, and faded memories of ancient battles, is a key element which separates pentecostal and conciliar church Christians.⁵⁸ A similar fear can also be seen to separate pentecostals from evangelicals and fundamentalists. The only hope for reducing or eradicating stereotypes, misunderstandings, and bad memories appears to be through volitional prayer and in meeting together.

In what type of venue should an ecumenical and neo/pentecostal gathering take place? Two of the most immediate questions raised by this one-way invitation involve the venue and the proposed agenda. Neither pentecostals nor neopentecostals are likely to be amenable to the idea of meeting in a "neutral" setting such as a hotel, for example. But even more importantly, what should take place at such an ecumenical gathering?

For years now the conciliar churches have invited, and even pleaded with, the neo/pentecostal churches to dialogue; and for years that invitation has been virtually ignored. Perhaps this is because even the invitation is implicitly tilted toward the WCC *modus operandi*, which is in its element discussing theological concepts. To invite the neo/pentecostal churches to dialogue is implicitly to insist that the churches meet on WCC "turf" with a WCC agenda, using WCC methodologies, even if the dialogue is based on theological concepts of mutual interest. Theological discussion has never featured high on the pentecostal list of priorities. As Hollenweger remarks: "Their charisma does not lie in theological formulas but in theological experiences."⁵⁹ Henry Lederle remarks that the distinctive element of pentecostalism is not its theology but "the experiencing of God's presence and power".⁶⁰ Clearly, neo/pentecostals are more experientially than theologically oriented. If conciliar church Christians are truly keen to understand neo/pentecostalism they must consider leaving the conference table and openmindedly participate in a variety of neo/pentecostal church services. In this way some genuine and helpful dialogue may be generated.

In the end, it may be that the potential of the charismatic renewal will once again be tapped to provide the impetus for such an exchange. An observation made by a WCC renewal participant suggests such a hope:

"The World Council of Churches has brought together Catholic and Protestant traditions, but it has not been a grassroots movement, nor does it have the potential of becoming one as long as it is based mainly on discussion. The charismatic movement, in the few years of its existence, has begun to bring together, in significant numbers, the Catholic stream, the main-line Protestant stream, the evangelical Protestant stream, and the Pentecostal stream...The future of the ecumenical movement depends on a grassroots renewal by the Holy Spirit!..."⁶¹

Perhaps the "perfect oneness" that Jesus prayed for centuries ago incorporates a trinitarian understanding of unity, a mysterious union of three distinct elements: Church, Truth, and Spirit. If so, the future of ecumenical unity may not actually depend solely upon either the Church, the Truth, or the Holy Spirit so much as upon the utter humility of the entire Church, a humility which acknowledges that the Church is less than whole without all its members.

From ecumenism to sociology. In Chapter Seven we shift the focus of our examination of neopentecostal missiology from the internal and religious to the external and secular. We wish to examine how neopentecostal missiology functions in and has been moulded by the larger context of society.

Chapter Seven

SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Up to this point our analysis of the neopentecostal missionary movement has involved an examination of its various components. In this chapter we change our focus in order to examine some of the larger, environmental factors which have helped shaped the movement. This type of analysis is an especially important component in the investigation of any religious movement because it considers factors rarely addressed by the movement itself. More specifically, a popular religious movement usually interprets its success theologically, explaining its popularity with words like "the Spirit of God is moving in our midst". Necessarily, then, it is to the historians and sociologists of religion to whom we look for the extra-spiritual explanations of neopentecostalism's presence and popularity in contemporary culture. The following analysis will include both a consideration of the 1960s, the decade in which neopentecostalism began to congeal into a movement, and a series of observations on how neopentecostalism appears to function in contemporary society.

Historical Milieu

For much of the world, the 1960s was a decade of drastic change and shifting values. In Africa and the United States, much of the turmoil centred on racial and religious issues. It was a decade which saw most African states simultaneously shed their colonial status and challenge their ecclesiastical institutions. In the United States, the 1960s blatantly revealed the deep racial cleft between blacks and whites; these ten years also saw the start of the Vietnam War and the "death of God" movement. Sydney Ahlstrom's summary of the sixties in America applies to many countries:

"The decade of the sixties was a time, in short, when the old foundations of national confidence, patriotic idealism, moral traditionalism, and even of historic Judaeo-Christian theism, were awash. Presuppositions that had held firm for centuries-even millennia-were being widely questioned. Some sensational manifestations came and went. . .but the existence of a basic shift of mood rooted in deep social and institutional dislocations was anything but ephemeral."¹

It was an unsettling decade for the Church. The theological questions raised in the 1960s by writers such as H. Richard Niebuhr, Gabriel Vahanian, Bishop J. A. T. Robinson, Pierre Berton, and Harvey Cox were translated into popular themes which trickled down to the Church's grassroots.² Questions were being asked by Christians at every level within the Church. Contemporaneous with the theological questions concerning the post-Christian age

was a questioning of all the traditional structures of Christianity, especially that of the parish church.³ Uncertainty, then, characterized the decade.

One result of the theological uncertainty of the sixties has been the plurality and choice of religions which now characterises many contemporary societies. No longer is the word of the minister, bishop, or Pope *necessarily* the word of God. In fact, modernity has created a situation in which religious picking and choosing has become an imperative; "heresy no longer stands out against a clear background of authoritative tradition."⁴ All religions are perceived as equal options for the religious consumer. This combination has provided an ideal climate for the proliferation of new religious movements. If religious authority is now perceived as reigning only within the walls of one's church of choice, and if there is no threat of banishment from society for one's beliefs, then is it not possible for any new sect to declare itself authoritative? In this light, it is not difficult to see why the number of new religious movements has increased substantially in the past thirty years.

As we know, it was in the tumultuous womb of the 1960s that neopentecostalism (and the charismatic renewal) grew beyond its embryonic state. Until this decade, the movement was represented by a motley group of itinerant healing evangelists and revival preachers criss-crossing countries and continents with a full gospel message. After this decade, neopentecostalism was represented less by roadside revivals than by settled congregations. Its message was increasingly preached in churches, not tents, and its constituency grew in socio-economic respectability. Further evidence of neopentecostalism's maturity since the sixties can be seen by its associations of churches and affiliated Bible schools.⁵

Why did neopentecostalism take shape in the 1960s? We have mentioned already a general reason in that this decade marked the beginning of a wide spread crumbling of centralised religious authority, and that, because of this, many societies were especially open to the spectrum of new religious movements. A more detailed explanation is that in discounting traditional ecclesiastical structure and liturgy, neopentecostalism stood as a religious symbol of the decade's counter-culture in which authority and history took a back seat to individualism and experience. Further, neopentecostalism, like the charismatic renewal, championed an inclusive understanding of the charismata; this conveyed the message that denominationalism and dogma mattered less than the experiencing of certain spiritual phenomena. Therefore, in the shape it assumed during the 1960s, neopentecostalism can be seen to have reflected (for the most part probably unintentionally) the prevailing tenor of decade; there is no doubt that this contributed to its popularity in the sixties. This theme, of neopentecostalism's reflection, or accommodation, of culture has

continued to characterise the movement in successive decades and comes under scrutiny in the following section.

Neopentecostalism in Society

We now want to consider some of the specific ways in which neopentecostalism has continued to reflect the prevailing ethos of many contemporary societies. Our thesis is this: neopentecostalism functions as a sacred chameleon in a secular society. That is to say, in a variety of ways, neopentecostalism has taken on the colours of the society in which it is present. Theologically, the movement reflects society in its emphases on prosperity and a personalized salvation. Ecclesiastically, neopentecostalism reflects society in its emphases on independence and egalitarianism; for example, the once holy distance between clergy and laity has been nearly eradicated. Additionally, since its earliest days, neopentecostalism, like society, has utilised two vital resources, youth and the media, to promulgate its message. We now consider these various sacred reflections of the secular.

Theological Reflections of the Secular

"The explicit and manifest function of religion is to offer [people] the prospect of salvation and to provide them with appropriate guidance for its attainment...it has been at the local level that [people] have mostly looked for evidences of salvation."⁶

From a consumer perspective, neopentecostalism offers an attractive salvation package. In some of its forms, the neopentecostal salvation message not only promises present wholeness and financial abundance, it also appears to require few spiritual disciplines. Its final reward is always a heavenly home. In its most extreme form, neopentecostal salvation appears to be a purely solo and utilitarian affair of the heart, the quintessential "opium" of Marx's description. This brand of salvation is attractive, then, because it promises much, demands little, and seems to have a high success rate. Kenneth Hagin, Jr's. account of a sermon he preached in Kenya illustrates a more extreme form of the neopentecostal salvation message:

"In one Kenyan village I preached, 'If this faith message only works in America, then it's not the Word of God.' I told the villagers if they would believe God, God would give them crops. I told them if they would believe God, they could get a bicycle. Getting a bicycle to some of them is like our getting a fine car. I told them if they would believe God, they could have tin roofs on their houses instead of thatched roofs. One year later I returned to that village for a pastor's conference. One man said, 'Look here! Look here! God gave me a bicycle. I had the biggest sugar cane crop of anybody in the village; everybody else had a crop failure. I sold my crop and was able to buy a bicycle and a tin roof for my house. I was the only man in the village who had any prosperity at all out of his crop this year.' I have a dream and a vision to take people from RHEMA Bible Training Center, go around

the world, and establish churches where people will preach the truth of the Word of God to these people."⁷

Hagin, Jr.'s story serves as a paradigm for the personalized and materialistic version of the neopentecostal gospel. Here we read of only one man in the village, apparently, who "believed God" for his crops; as a result of *his* faith he was able to buy a bicycle and a tin roof for himself. Hagin appears to discount the fact that, in traditional East African society, the successful man would be presumed to be a witch who had successfully cursed the other villagers, not a man who had been prospered by God. Health and wealth in traditional African societies is normally understood only in the context of family or clan, never for the individual.⁸

Neopentecostalism's pragmatic promises find a natural welcome in the Nigerian context. In Nigeria, any religion of merit must be, above all, a practical religion. In his 1982 study of two prophetic churches in southeastern Nigeria, G.I.S. Amadi writes:

"For most Southern Nigerians, religion must be both utilitarian and futuristic to be worthwhile. This means that it must be capable of providing its adherents with the good things of the here and now, while at the same time holding out for them the hope of some sort of future existence, which may be enjoyed here or in the hereafter."⁹

Evaluated in the light of Amadi's prerequisites, the Deeper Life gospel should be very appealing. It promises both healing and heaven, making it attractive to both the consumer seeking immediate goods and the long-term investor. The fact that Kumuyi changed the Thursday Evangelism School into a Thursday Miracle Revival Hour is indicative of Kumuyi's awareness that the pragmatic needs of the community must be met. He explains the change to Isaacson:

"We had been emphasising the evangelism training, reaching out and talking to people. But I took time off and analysed the congregation. I realised that most of the people were single, young people. This meant that we were reaching young people, but I wanted to know why we were not reaching adults. I saw that the felt and known needs of adults were more on getting healed, having a happy family, having job satisfaction, and a lot of other things. I felt that in the New Testament these needs were addressed. So I thought, 'We'll still evangelise, but we'll couch our message in the language that will meet the felt needs of the people'. We therefore changed our Thursday Evangelism Training to 'Miracle Revival Hour'. The people, especially adults, started coming, and they were being healed and saved. We saw more people pressing forward to want to know the Lord than we saw before. When our emphasis was on personal evangelism, we were not getting people of traditional religion and other religions as much as we do now that we are addressing their felt and known needs."¹⁰

In emphasising healing, then, Kumuyi is offering a practical religion which appears to be a necessity in the context of Southern Nigeria.

However, it is when neopentecostalism explicitly promotes a doctrine of prosperity that it reflects an exaggerated accommodation of culture. That its proponents have crossed the bounds of orthodoxy can be seen in the charges of "heresy" that have been leveled at the prosperity doctrine by other Christians, including pentecostals. Sociologist James Hunter has remarked that narcissism has largely displaced asceticism as the dominant attitude within theologically conservative Protestantism; we conclude that in the prosperity doctrine this self-absorption is near its pinnacle.¹¹

While a church must accommodate culture to some degree in order to effectively communicate its gospel, the church which overly accommodates its surrounding milieu is in perilous theological waters. The church that is too comfortable in the world runs the risk of being rendered mute, its prophetic voice, challenging Christians to imitate Christ and calling the Church to stand firm as a beacon of love, reconciliation, and justice, is silenced by its desire for respectability and ease. Wilbert Shenk describes the situation in terms of syncretism:

"The Church that is aware of being in missionary encounter with its culture is continually wrestling with the issues syncretism poses. The Church enters a danger zone when it is no longer self-consciously critical of its relation to culture and asking the question as to what the path of faithfulness involves. The Church must always adapt to its culture in a way that enables it to live and communicate the gospel credibly. This is constructive syncretism. If the Church becomes merely the religious reflection of its culture, it has sold its birthright. That is destructive syncretism."¹²

We conclude that in its prosperity emphasis, neopentecostalism's syncretism is of a destructive nature. Its theological emphasis on a personalized and materialistic salvation so reflects its surrounding environment that it functions, in most instances, as a cultural echo, with no voice of its own. From the annals of ecclesiastical history, we know that this is a relatively safe, but not an admirable nor a faithful, theological posture.

Ecclesiastical Reflections of the Secular

A number of the prevailing themes of popular culture can be discerned in neopentecostalism's structure. For example, in its ecclesiastical independency, the movement can be seen to reflect contemporary culture's challenge of authority. As well, in its informality and egalitarianism, neopentecostalism can be seen to reflect the present-day challenges to class structure and time-honoured traditions, especially academia. We discuss first the contemporary significance of the movement's ecclesiastical independency.

External Structure

In its independency over and against the Church, neopentecostalism can be seen to reflect the contemporary trend to challenge authority. In claiming to have the "full gospel", neopentecostals, like their pentecostal predecessors, stand firmly against the inclusivist principle and authority of "the Church". Further, most neo/pentecostals do not co-operate with others Christians for the sake of the Church. Sociologist Bryan Wilson remarks on the similar dynamics that can be seen underlying the charismatic renewal. Especially noteworthy is the suggestion that its adherents do not seem fully aware of the cultural values they have imbibed:

"...this new movement, with a considerable contingent of middle-class votaries, as well as of priests and nuns among its members, manifests, perhaps with little awareness of the implications of the attitudes they espouse, much of the dissident and restless spirit and the rejection of formal procedures, dignity, order, and intellectual commitment that, in the last two decades, have so strongly characterized secular society in the West."¹³

In their rejection of the historic denominations, neopentecostals have taken one giant step beyond the participants in the charismatic renewal. Neopentecostals have not only searched for new ways by which to express their faith, they have also decided on a new ecclesiastical authority. In his study on Latin American pentecostalism, Willems concluded that "organizational schism seems to be a more adequate means of expressing rebellion against the traditional social order than the doctrinal schism."¹⁴ We agree. In their independency, neopentecostals are more ecclesiastically radical than their charismatic counterparts. In sum, in its independency, neopentecostalism can be seen as a religious reflection of the contemporary trend to question and reject the authority of the traditional social order.

Internal Structure

In reflecting society's propensity for classlessness and informality, neopentecostalism inherently challenges the Church's reverence of both tradition and academia. Two observations serve to illustrate this point. As in our society today, a tenor of egalitarianism prevails within neopentecostalism. In the worship setting, a deliberate diminution of the distance between clergy and laity is realised by the expectation that every member of the congregation will participate in some manner. In this same worship context, there is also the expectation that a "Spirit-filled" participant might receive a "word from the Lord" to share with the congregation; therefore, the minister no longer functions as the only "mouthpiece of the

Lord". While there is still a discernible hierarchy within neopentecostal church structure, the fact remains that, as a worshipping body, neopentecostals function very nearly as equals.¹⁵

This type of egalitarianism, based on the mutual exchange of "words from the Lord", alludes to the decidedly prophetic overtones in the neopentecostal movement. In fact, neopentecostalism appears to promote a "prophethood of all believers" as opposed to the more traditional "priesthood". This is actually a logical transference since, historically, the title "prophet" was conferred only by God, whereas the title "priest" was also conferred by the elders of an ecclesiastical community. Implied in the priesthood is a period of formal theological training, after which one is technically qualified for spiritual leadership. There are exceptions, however, in the prophethood; several Old Testament prophets were not formally trained for their posts; rather, they were called directly by God out of ordinary vocations. These untrained prophets have set a precedent for neo/pentecostals being called to a ministry of prophecy; not only formally trained clergy but untrained laity have a role to perform in the church. In diminishing priesthood and highlighting prophethood, then, neopentecostalism can be seen to encourage a sort of religious egalitarianism.

In reflecting society's questioning of the necessity of formal education, neopentecostalism, like pentecostalism and other independent church traditions, can be seen to employ an alternative credential program, otherwise known as "the anointing". We recall from Chapter Two how central the anointing has been in the lives of Kenneth Hagin and Reinhard Bonnke, especially. In practice, neopentecostals appear to believe that having the anointing supersedes any earned academic degrees; in fact, having the anointing is the greatest guarantee of one's spiritual success.

Because a similar concept of the anointing is a common element in African Christianity (and not just in its independency branches), we may gain a further clue as to why neopentecostalism has found fertile that continent's spiritual soil. In a study of religion in Zimbabwe, Inus Daneel remarks on the indispensability of a minister having the anointing:

"The mystique of the ministry is not attached to the authority to celebrate the sacraments or to theological education, but is present in the anointed man of God who can perform the rituals of the Church and lead its worship, help his people in their everyday troubles through his gifts of healing or revelation or interpretation, and discipline them in their attempts to follow the pattern of Christian life laid down by the Church."¹⁶

While in the African context "the anointing" may not function in exactly the same manner as it does in North America, its purpose in both contexts is virtually identical: the anointing identifies a woman or man who possesses the power of God. In any context, having

the anointing functions as a prerequisite for a person's ability to minister effectively; therefore, the anointing itself is as essential to a neopentecostal (and others who share a belief in the anointing) as a Bachelor or Master of Divinity degree is to a Presbyterian. When so anointed, most neopentecostal ministers will see little need for additional, formal theological preparation.¹⁷

We see in its promotion of egalitarianism and informality that neopentecostalism reflects two prevalent themes of contemporary culture. There is no doubt but that by promoting such popular themes, neopentecostalism has added to its numbers. We turn now to consider neopentecostalism's utilisation of mass media and youth.

Popular Reflections of the Secular

In its awareness and utilisation of popular culture, its willingness to engage a youthful workforce, and its presence at the grassroots level, neopentecostalism functions much like a successful contemporary corporation. While the fact of neopentecostalism's profitable use of mass media has already been well established and documented, its advertising techniques have received relatively little analysis.¹⁸

One such promotional image utilised in neopentecostal literature and advertising is that of the battlefield.¹⁹ Although battles, real and figurative, are found throughout the Bible, and although these images have been employed historically by various branches of the Church, battle imagery has not been popular in twentieth century Christianity. Groups like the Salvation Army that have retained war imagery are seen to be outmoded. We want to suggest that, with the advent of neopentecostalism in the 1960s, the language and imagery of battle have been updated and revitalised.

There are several tactical advantages in neopentecostalism's utilisation of battle language. First, employing battle language projects an image of strength and victory for the movement; the implication is that to "join forces" with neopentecostalism is to identify with the winners.²⁰ As well, battle language can be seen as a means by which men, historically outnumbered in Christianity, are drawn into the movement. Illustrative of this is the 1989 neopentecostal conference held in Phoenix, Arizona which was entitled "Take It By Force" and was sponsored by a group calling itself the "Mighty Men"; there is little doubt that the conference was designed to appeal to the male sex. This "battle" type of advertising also counters the "weak pacifist" image of Christianity promoted by many churches within the WCC.²¹ Finally, from an advertising perspective, battle imagery is simply a good contemporary marketing technique. Increasingly violent societies can identify with the

language of warfare, and the world's desperate need for heroes can be mitigated with a new hero, Jesus. Further, portraying the Christian life as a battle is one way that individuals can fight without (necessarily) shedding blood. In the 1990s, then, battle imagery is an effective agent by which to promote neopentecostal Christianity.

Like many voluntary organisations, neopentecostalism has capitalised on the youth market. Youth in more affluent societies often have the option of spending a year or two on "self-development" which typically translates into having the privilege to travel or engage in volunteer work. It is this group that is especially targeted by voluntary societies like missionary agencies and the Peace Corp. In recruiting, neopentecostal mission groups advertise and operate under the assumption that "anyone can be used by God", thus appealing to the widest possible audience. In employing young missionaries, even on a temporary basis, groups like YWAM and Rhema are able to forge loyalties which aid in promoting neopentecostalism; these young women and men are the future of the movement.

In employing large numbers of young people, neopentecostalism has helped assure its own continuity. Nowhere can this be seen better than in the ministry of YWAM. Cunningham's vision for the size and constituency of YWAM is key to understanding the mission's momentum; his present goal is to have 50,000 full-time workers. He tells interviewer Woodling:

"That's a 10-fold increase from where we are now. In order to do that, I expect first-worlders to be at about 20,000 and the third-worlders to be about 30,000. I don't feel that the only potential for evangelizing the world is through America by any means. But I do feel America has a leadership role. As I see the world today, some of the greatest potential for missions is third-world people. They're a huge, untapped area..."²²

In this remark, Cunningham speaks much like an executive of any multinational corporation. People are untapped potential as agents in the task of world evangelisation. As he is competing for primary loyalty in recruiting people for full-time ministry, Cunningham had best be good in his task.

Finally, like the successful corporation, neopentecostalism is making its presence known at the level of the local community. By sharing the gospel story in community, as an integral part of their daily lives, neopentecostals are able to maintain a consistent attention on the Christian gospel. Alyward Shorter reminds his readers that:

"Evangelism and the inculcation of Gospel values only become effective in community experience and community action, since it is primarily in the community that the Gospel is comprehended, proclaimed and lived."²³

By engaging in proclamation evangelism at the community level, neopentecostals are seeing results. By imbibing a number of contemporary advertising techniques, the neopentecostal movement, then, can be perceived as a reflection of popular culture.

Concluding Remarks

One of neopentecostalism's most significant contributions, particularly in the western world, is its formidable challenge to the philosophical cornerstone of that culture: scientific rationality. In 1931 Emil Brunner wrote that "if once this magic spell [of the self-sufficiency of rational man] were broken, there would be room for the Gospel".²⁴ In their fervent advocacy of the power of the Holy Spirit to effect all kinds of miracles, neopentecostals (like pentecostals and charismatics) have assisted in loosening the rationalistic mentality of the west.

Although sociologists and theologians use different terminology to describe the timing and appearance of the "supra-rational" neopentecostal movement, their explanations are really quite similar. Sociologically, the appearance of the neopentecostal movement has been described as one response to an unmet demand for more efficacious compensators of traditional faith. The impotency of conventional religious traditions created a need for "revival".²⁵ Theologically, the movement is perceived to be "recapturing the early church's belief in and practice of mighty works".²⁶ In both descriptions we understand the neopentecostal movement to be a movement concerned with the restoration of spiritual potency. In reasserting the tangible supernatural power of the gospel, neopentecostalism has challenged the supremacy of scientific reasoning. This is neopentecostalism's significant contribution to the west.

Particularly in Africa and Latin America, neopentecostalism reinforces the importance of understanding and working within oral-aural cultures. While "Christian theology has always been oral and literary", its oral nature clearly dominates the patterns of communication in the 1990s.²⁷ For neopentecostalism to be fully understood, then, its oral-aural orientation will have to be taken more seriously by its researchers.²⁸ For example, any overall assessment of a movement will be incomplete without analyses of its sermons, music, dance, worship and other rituals, audio-visual materials, and its evangelism practices. In studying these expressions of its theology, researchers will help correct the west's bias toward only according academic merit to that which is written.

How intentional has neopentecostalism been in assuming the role of sacred chameleon in society? It is a mixed verdict. The movement seems far less intentional about its

structural independency and egalitarianism than it does about its theological emphases on wealth and wholeness. In its prosperity theology, neopentecostalism appears quite deliberate in its intention to appeal to the materialistic desires of individuals.

Finally, to whom does neopentecostalism appeal? Does it, like early pentecostalism, appeal to the "dispossessed"? Or has it presented a "respectable" profile from its inception, drawing mostly from the middle classes? While not enough data is readily available to provide a conclusive answer, there is some evidence, in the form of both personal observation and literature, to suggest that neopentecostalism may appeal most to the suburban middle classes.

One factor that suggests its middle class constituency is the fact that, historically, neopentecostalism developed concurrently and shared resources as well as a theology of the charismata with the solidly middle class charismatic renewal. Both are "movements of the Spirit" which took a definitive shape in the 1960s. A number of ministers, most notably Oral Roberts, mixed readily with both independent and denominational bodies; joining the Methodist communion can be seen as the pinnacle of that interaction.²⁹ Further, some neopentecostal churches and fellowships are the product of a denominational congregation splitting over issues of charismata.³⁰ If the nucleus of the new, independent congregation is drawn from the middle class it seems likely that the congregation will continue to attract similar participants. The connectedness of the two movements, then, is detected in its historical and theological overlapping.

Another factor to suggest neopentecostalism's middle class constituency is its links with and emphasis on education. For example, the history of Kumuyi's ministry is connected with the University of Lagos and continues to attract a segment of Nigeria's professional class.³¹ In Nigeria especially, a university education appears to be symbolic of upper class privilege. Many of YWAM's recruits are likely to be students; once back from their posts, these students act potentially as zealous YWAM agents among their peers. Even Rhema, with its Bible Training Centres, appeals, in a limited manner, to the middle class value of education. While more data on the various bodies which represent neopentecostalism are required to assess its overall constituency, these two reasons suggest a largely middle class constituency.

We return to the ecclesiastical world in our next chapter as we examine how neopentecostalism relates to the wider Church. The issues of neopentecostalism's rapid growth and its typically disproportionate emphasis on privilege are subjects of Chapter Eight.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WIDER ECCLESIASTICAL CONCERNS

In its consideration of the neopentecostal missionary movement, the Church appears especially concerned about two issues in particular, its rapid growth and its characteristically heavy stress on the privileges associated with being a Christian. In the following chapter we address both these topics as well as suggest additional issues that neopentecostalism and the Church raise for one another.

REASONS FOR GROWTH

Neopentecostalism's growth can be largely explained by its intentional proclamation evangelism and its practical appeal. Put another way, neopentecostalism has grown because of its overriding concern to communicate a gospel message that promises to meet virtually every type of personal need. In the following section the evidence for these two factors is developed; we begin with the movement's deliberate emphasis on proclamation evangelism.

The most tangible evidence of neopentecostalism's evangelistic intentionality is the size of its missionary movement. With the exception of Rhema, all our case study groups are characterised by their ardent evangelism.¹ For example, YWAM is the world's largest short term mission agency; one of its current goals is to increase its full-time staff from approximately 6500 to 50.000.² Reinhard Bonnke desire to preach the gospel before the largest possible audiences; one of his stated goals is to preach before a single audience of one million people.³ In less than two decades the Deeper Life Church has established daughter churches throughout Nigeria, in ten African nations, and in several Asian and western capitals.⁴ An expansionist mentality, then, can be seen as a characteristic feature of neopentecostalism. This mentality is also demonstrated by Bonnke and YWAM's practice of reporting convert total, a practice which focuses specific attention on the importance of proclamation evangelism.⁵

Another evidence of the neopentecostals' evangelistic intentionality is the way in which the charismata, or spiritual gifts, are used to evangelistic ends. For example, particularly in the ministries of Deeper Life and Christ for All Nations, spiritual gifts such as words of knowledge, prophecy, and healing are understood to function not only for the edification and internal ministry of the Church but as implements for evangelism. Viewed as supernatural signs and wonders, these spiritual gifts are used to demonstrate to non-Christians the existence and

supremacy of God over all other spiritual beings, with conversion as the ultimate goal. Kumuyi asserts the necessity of such an approach in the African context:

"Some may feel miracles are not for today. Others may think all the church should care for is the salvation of souls. But in Africa and amongst the black people of the globe, hard-core Gospel preaching may not give the desired result. The Gospel must be preached with 'signs following'. The proof and evidence of the love and concern of God pave the path of the Gospel in Africa. It prepares the heart of the people for the Word of God. God, in the growth of the Deeper Life Bible Church, has strategically and prudently used miracles to make all come to him (John 3.26) in Deeper Life."⁶

Another factor of neopentecostalism's evangelistic effectiveness is its utilisation of a variety of communication channels.⁷ By capitalising on the world's airwaves since the 1950s, neopentecostals have preached regularly in even the most remote African villages via transistor radio. Concurrently on other continents, neopentecostals have made use of additional airwaves which enable them to be seen on television as well; Hagin and Hagin Jr's radio and television coverage exemplify this trend among neopentecostals. In a continued effort to gain the widest possible audience, neopentecostals also offer their message in the form of audio and video cassettes.⁸ All four of our case study groups feature an abundance of audio tapes; additionally, all but the Deeper Life Church feature videos of sermons and crusades.⁹ In sum, then, by transmitting their gospel through a variety of communication channels, neopentecostals demonstrate their intentionality in world evangelisation.¹⁰

We conclude that one reason for the rapid growth of neopentecostalism is its intentional emphasis on evangelism. In focusing its efforts on a singular task, world evangelisation, neopentecostalism appears to prioritise numerical growth. The size of its missionary movement, its evangelistic use of the charismata, and the diversity of its communication channels are all evidence of this intentionality.

A strong practical appeal is the second reason for neopentecostalism's rapid growth. The promise of miracles, prosperity and protection, and tangible caring all contribute to the movement's appeal. The attraction of such a gospel to millions of people is not surprising in view of the promised benefits.

Testimonies to miracles, especially miraculous physical healing, neopentecostalism's most appealing feature, abound in the literature of all our case study groups except YWAM. From the restoration of sight, speech, and even life to the eradication of cancer, infertility, and addiction, healings are a regular and expected element of the neopentecostal gospel. Consider the following representative testimonies culled from the literature of Deeper Life, Christ for All Nations, and Rhema:

"Theresa Ogoporaye Onopite of 1 Ayoola Street, New Garage, Gbagada, was nick-named 'Mrs. Native doctor' because of her patronage of native doctors and 'healers'. She recalled that since she married peace had alluded her matrimonial home. On an occasion during one of those violent family brawls she was rushed to the Lagos University Teaching Hospital and it was discovered that her kidney had been damaged. That was the beginning of her plight. 'After some medication', she continued 'I was told that the problem had no permanent cure.' During a surgical operation, one of the many efforts made to help her, she died. All efforts to revive her proved abortive. Consequently the body was taken to the mortuary. In the mortuary, God's miraculous power brought her back to life on the 5th day! Notwithstanding, the problem persisted and defied all treatments. But pressure came from friends and loved ones that God would help her if she came to Deeper Life Bible Church. She reluctantly agreed to be taken to Deeper Life Bible Church. It was a Thursday Miracle Service. Theresa recalled that 'To the glory of God, my problem was the third the Holy Ghost singled out while the pastor was praying. The pastor said, 'The woman who was just discharged from LUTH yesterday in the congregation should raise up her hand. God wants to heal you. I raised my hand and was prayed for and the healing instantaneously followed. The medical check up that followed showed no problem any more. Praise the Lord."¹¹

"What a blessing your radio program, 'Faith Seminar of the Air', has been to me. I accepted Jesus at age twelve, and I have gone to church all of my life. But at age forty-seven, I turned on your program and for the first time, I heard about receiving the Holy Spirit, about speaking in tongues, and about Jesus healing *today* just as He did in Bible times. What a revelation that was to me! That knowledge has changed my life. I was filled with the Holy Spirit, and I now speak in tongues. I was also healed of arthritis and bursitis. God has worked miracles in my life again and again, including delivering my son, who is now a recovered drug addict and alcoholic."¹²

"I am thankful to the Lord for giving me this opportunity to testify to you what the Lord has done for me and is still doing. It has taken me two years to look for your address and by the grace of God, I have found it...I am one of those you prayed for in August 1986 in Blantyre, Malawi. I had a heart palpitation problem, severe headache...and I had been married for five years without a child. You prayed one day specially for ladies who by nature had no children. After prayer, you said everyone who believed should buy napkins! Since that day, I changed my prayer from 'Lord, grant me' to 'Thank you Lord for the child'. The same month, I conceived...I have a baby girl who is now two years and two months old. Her name is Faith, according to Hebrews 11.1-'The assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen'. All the illnesses are gone, and now I am expecting another baby."¹³

"I am a 54-year old grandmother. For the past 52 years I suffered with asthma and respiratory problems...I had been saved for a long time, but was ignorant of God's Word about healing. I didn't know the truth: that God healed us through His Son Jesus on the Cross, that He took our sicknesses, and that we were healed! Praise God, He touched me and I knew I was healed, but I was reluctant to tell others about it. Finally, I told my family and a close friend. A few nights later I turned on the television and saw you, Brother Hagin, on TBN. Oh, how I praise God for your ministry in the area of faith. I got so excited when I heard what you were saying. You talked about confessing our healings, speaking them, saying them. I started to do that. I told of my healing over and over again, and the more I spoke it and confessed it, the better I felt! I went to the Christian bookstore and bought *lots* of your books on faith. I also read your book on how *to keep* my healing. Every time some of the symptoms would start to return, such as wheezing or shortness of breath, I would do what you said to do in your books. I would say, 'No, that can't be because the Lord has healed me and I will not get sick

again. So, wheezing, you have to go. Leave now, in the Name of Jesus! I will not allow that sickness to return.' Praise God, it works! I haven't had bronchitis in two years!..."¹⁴

The promise of God's providential care is another facet of neopentecostalism's practical appeal. Most pronounced in the literature of the two case study churches, this theme of divine providence is understood to be consistently measured out in terms of prosperity in areas such as one's finances, career, and harvest; as well, there is the promise of protection from curses, sicknesses, and natural disasters. The following citations serve to illustrate this theme:

"My name is Bridget Orungbe from Oworonshoki Zone, Lagos. I was a sinner before my conversion. I was jobless for 6 years. On the 23rd of Dec., 1986, I realised my sinfulness, knelt down, confessed my sins and promised not to go back to them again. Now I am a child of God. I had been running up and down for a job since 1983 without any. All the opportunities I had refused to materialise. Ill-luck dogged in my heels. Whenever I had a job, confusion often cropped up on the resumption day which normally ended my chances. This led me to many herbalists before my salvation. I have as many as 65 occultic incisions all over my body from one native doctor because of job. The job never came. After one Saturday Workers' Meeting, a brother notified me of a vacancy in his office. I was there the following Monday and I was immediately employed. Praise the Lord!"¹⁵

"...First of all, we thank God for all the great teaching we have received from the Hagin family at Campmeetings and through books and tapes. At the time of need, the depth of your heart comes to us. Praise God for the Word of God in our hearts. In September 1989, hurricane 'Hugo' hit the Carolinas. My husband and I live one hundred feet from the ocean. When we were evacuating our home, we held hands and spoke to our Father in heaven about the situation. We commissioned our angels to stand guard over our home. The waves were very high as we were leaving, but because we were trusting in God, we had peace...We returned home to find disaster everywhere. Many homes were moved blocks away from their foundations and were sitting in the streets. Hotels were totally washed away and the concrete wall next to our home was gone. Our home was like a beacon of light; it stood firmly in place! Not a drop of water was inside. Our porch, which is only one hundred feet from ocean, was not damaged. Not even the carpet was damaged (we did lose the porch light bulb)! God gives us all the same authority, but we must believe by faith and act upon it. He is faithful to all of His promises to us, and we must be faithful to Him..."¹⁶

"Thank you for praying with me about my husband who had a stroke in February. He has been *totally restored* and is back at work. Praise the Lord! During this time I also lost a large sum of money, but I later found it intact. I had left my purse in the hospital cafeteria and I didn't miss it for three hours. It had credit cards and a large amount of cash in it. But it was returned without so much as a penny missing. Isn't God good! He also provided for us financially while my husband was out of work. Praise His holy Name!"¹⁷

In reflecting on these testimonies, we see that more important than questions of authenticity, timing, and common sense is the fact that these people believe neopentecostal theology works. A theology that seems to solve desperate and insoluble problems is going to

be a popular theology. The neopentecostal movement demonstrates that it is the theology which meets the widest range of felt needs that will attract the greatest number of adherents.

A further facet of neopentecostalism's practical appeal is its tendency to meet, at the level of the local congregation, the material needs of its members.¹⁸ While neopentecostals do not have a monopoly on pastoral care, they are characterised by their deep caring for one another. One reason for this is that instead of diffusing their material support to all the needy in a given geographical area neopentecostal churches tend to concentrate their assistance on church members. It does not appear unusual for these churches to assist with job searches and rent payments as well as with emergency shelter and provisions; Deeper Life even offers its members maternity care.¹⁹ In smaller churches, the pastor is likely to be directly involved in this process. For example, among pentecostal pastors in Latin America, Manuel Gaxiola remarks that:

"...Pentecostal pastors in Latin America have also helped their members to improve their standard of living. This has resulted from a combination of factors, but chiefly from the giving up of serious vices such as alcoholism and profligacy in general; the cultivation of traditional Protestant values like hard work, frugality, and self-reliance; a new sense of personal pride in identifying with a progressive movement; and the restoration of family life. In all of this the Pentecostal pastor has become the motivating force and the example to his flock. He is one of them; in many cases he founded the church and grew up, spiritually, socially, and economically, with it. Often he was as poor as the people were, but he has risen on the economic ladder through his own efforts, for he is not required to renounce his job or trade and work 'full-time' for the church as most other ministers are. He preaches and counsels, just like any other minister, but at the same time he helps his individual members in many other ways. He secures jobs for them, out of his own pocket he gives money when needed, and he makes sure that all members care for one another. I believe that the average Pentecostal minister is more intimately concerned for each of his members than the average Protestant minister or priest..."²⁰

Obviously, the type and amount of material assistance will vary with the relative wealth of a particular congregation, and yet, the spirit of generosity noted by Gaxiola appears to be characteristic of the larger neo/pentecostal movement. Consider the nature and extent of Deeper Life's practical ministry to its members as reported by two of its leaders:

"We emphasise both the spiritual life, and also catering for member's needs. The church cares for the needy. If a family needs financial aid, the House Caring Fellowship leader will see what to do. If the House Caring Fellowship cannot help, they ask the Area. If the Area cannot help, they ask the Zone! By the grace of God the church has helped many families with practical caring and love."

"If a wife has an unbelieving husband, we will send a delegation to plead with the husband to allow his wife to continue coming to the church. It is like an extended family-a spiritual family-the whole of Deeper Life-in the membership of Deeper Life. Of course, if our neighbour is sick, we help-but the love and caring is not as deep as for a fellow-member. When a member is sick, it is the House Caring Fellowship's responsibility to take care of them: to visit, even sleep in their house,

especially if they can't take care of themselves. The House Caring Fellowship will cook for them, and buy them what they need. Recently a fire burnt a member's home. We got them cooking utensils, clothing, food, and resettled them immediately. We provide food or money for our members who are unemployed..."²¹

Suggested in the range of care which Deeper Life offers its members is the concept of the "extended family". The services Deeper Life provides are not dissimilar to those traditionally provided in more rural villages. May it not be that contributing to Deeper Life's appeal is the fact that, in urban settings especially, it offers its members a "home away from home"?

At this point one might question people's motives for attending neopentecostal churches. With benefits like healing, financial assistance, and protection from curses it is obvious that many people participate with hopes of tapping into this ecclesiastical storehouse. In fact, because of its promised benefits, the neopentecostal movement is likely to attract many people desirous of some type of material "blessing". And yet, some people drawn to the movement by self-centred motives will participate long enough to be transformed by its spiritual message. Naturally, this is the hope of the committed membership.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES

In his book *The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology*, Lesslie Newbigin makes the following assertion:

"...God chooses men and women for the service of his mission. To be a Christian is to be part of the chosen company-chosen, not for privilege, but for responsibility..."²²

Implied in Newbigin's statement is the existence of a spectrum, from responsibility to privilege, that defines what is meant for a Christian to be chosen by God. In declaring that the Christian is chosen for responsibility and not privilege, Newbigin aligns himself with one pole of this spectrum. In their almost exclusive emphasis on the privileges of the believer, some neopentecostal groups align themselves with the other pole.

It would be erroneous, however, to insist on either responsibility or privilege, exclusively, as the mark of the Christian. Christians are chosen for *both* responsibility and privilege. Christians are to be characterised, for example, by their servant-like manner as well as by the "peace of God that passes all understanding". Christ promised both the cross and abundant life to his followers. Maintaining an orthodox combination of the privileges and responsibilities of Christian living is a continual challenge for the Church. In the following

section each of our case study groups will be assessed in terms of Newbigin's criteria of responsibility and privilege. We shall consider how each group balances these two factors in theory and in practice. We begin with Rhema.

Rhema

Rhema represents that extreme subgroup of neopentecostalism which promotes Christian privileges at the expense of practically all responsibility. Teaching Christians to know and secure these privileges is an important feature of the Hagins' ministry. Their literature is overflowing with references to Christian privileges; we present the following representative selection:

"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE UNTO ALL THINGS, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come...Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; THAT THY PROFITING MAY APPEAR TO ALL (1 Timothy 4.7, 8, 15). Paul plainly said, 'Godliness is profitable' (v.8). If anything is profitable, it pays off. Companies making financial reports to their stockholders lists profits and losses. Thank God there is profit from serving God. Living for God is not detrimental to a successful life. It is 'profitable unto ALL things'...First, godliness insures *protection*...Second, godliness insures *promotion*...Third, godliness insures *prosperity*...Fourth, godliness will insure *perpetuity*...Godliness means live for God. It's profitable. It pays off in this life. In *this* life! And in *the life to come*. Be determined. Live for God." ²³

"Paul said that what happened to Israel happened as an example for us (1 Corinthians 10.11). When God led the children of Israel out of Egypt (which is a type of the world), He didn't abandon them in the wilderness; He had a further blessing for them. He had another land for them: Canaan's land. Canaan is a type of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and our rights and privileges in Christ, which include healing. God promised the children of Israel repeatedly that He was going to give them that land. When they finally crossed over the Jordan River into Caanan, God said, 'Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses' (Joshua 1.3). God had said He would give them the land, but the people had to *possess* it. That's how it is with our rights and privileges in Christ. *Healing belongs to us*. God has provided it for us. But we have to possess it. Unless we possess the provision, we will not enjoy its benefits...Healing is a gift, like salvation, already paid for at Calvary. All we need to do is accept it. All we need to do is possess the promise that is ours. As children of God, we need to realize that *healing belongs to us*." ²⁴

"We must be able to stand in the presence of the devil and his demons and boldly put them on the run in the Name of Jesus! Stand strong in the power of His might (Ephesians 6.10), and don't allow the devil to overcome you! Too many times believers are not bold when it comes to declaring their victory over the devil in Jesus' Name. The reason they are not is that they don't know who they are in Christ. Because they don't know their rights and privileges in Christ, they begin to look at the circumstances and feel overwhelmed by the enemy's strategies against them. They don't know that in Jesus they have boldness and confidence to approach the Father with freedom and without fear (Ephesians 3.12); therefore, they have absolute boldness to stand against Satan in the Name of Jesus...We are to be bold toward the devil, demons, sickness, disease, poverty, and every work of darkness. Because of who we are in Christ, we can boldly stand in the

presence of the devil without fear and say, 'Satan, I take authority over you in my life in the Name of Jesus. You are a defeated foe!' (Matthew 18.18; Philippians 2.9, 10; Colossians 2.15)..."²⁵

In the context of our present discussion, the difficulty with the Hagins' material relating to believers' rights and privileges is that it is not accompanied by, nor presented in the context of, Christian responsibility. There is, in fact, little evidence of any notion of Christian responsibility in Rhema literature. Only when perused does the literature reveal scattered traces of a Christian responsibility to evangelism. Of all the Hagins' books and booklets, no title appears to pertain exclusively to evangelism. In one book, Hagin Jr's *How To Make the Dream God Gave You Come True*, three pages of its twenty-five discuss "The Church's Vision: The World"; this appears to be one of the only references to evangelism in all the Hagins' books. Of twenty-one feature articles in ten issues of *The Word of Faith*, just four make any reference to the necessity of evangelism.²⁶ In three of these four articles, the reference to evangelism is ephemeral, being exhausted in three paragraphs, one paragraph, and two sentences, respectively. In only one article, Hagin Jr's "Don't Quit in the Midst of Turmoil", does the theme of evangelism pervade the entire text. In this article we read that:

"Every believer should have God's Word burning within his heart. Every believer should always be ready to preach its life-giving message to those who need to hear it. We are a people who have been given a challenge, for Jesus said, '...GO ye into all the world, and PREACH THE GOSPEL to every creature' (Mark 16.15). We have a mandate from Jesus Himself!...We can't make a decision to quit based on how discouraged we feel. Feelings don't have anything to do with it! Yes, we have free will, and we can choose to disobey God by giving up on what He has called us to do. But if we want to serve God and walk in fellowship with Him, we cannot disobey His Word. And in His Word, Jesus commanded every Christian-not just ministers-to go into the world to be a witness for Him (Mark 16.15)."²⁷

This one reference, albeit undiluted, stands virtually alone in conveying to Hagin's audience any sense of Christian responsibility; at least twenty other articles and scores of books are silent on the subject. It appears that in its concern to highlight neglected themes of believers' benefits, Rhema has neglected practically all themes relating to believers' responsibilities. Rhema's practical silence on the responsibilities that are to characterise a Christian condemns it as a misrepresentation of Christianity.

How does Rhema understand the Christian's calling? From the evidence presented in the organisation's literature, we conclude that Rhema perceives the Christian to be called, first and almost exclusively, to a life of gaining one's spiritual rights and privileges. When extant, Rhema's references to Christian responsibility are defined only in terms of evangelism. A church which promotes privilege at the cost of responsibility fails to consider the whole gospel; we conclude that because Rhema markets its message in this manner, it ultimately fails as a full reflection of the Church.

Reinhard Bonnke's definition of responsibility and privilege is similar to that of the Hagins. Like the Hagins, Bonnke balances the many privileges of the Christian with just one responsibility, evangelism. However, unlike Hagin and Hagin Jr, whose emphasis on evangelism is parenthetical, Bonnke unmistakably links Christian privileges such as Holy Spirit baptism and healing with the responsibility of evangelism. Evangelism, to Bonnke, is not presented as an addendum to a believer's privilege list; instead, evangelism and privileges are to be knit together in the life of the believer. Let us consider the following excerpts:

"The fire of God is not sent just for the enjoyment of a few emotional experiences. Praise God, though, the fire of God has that glorious side effect. Holy Ghost power produces lively meetings. But not being happy-clappy does not satisfy God's design. The Holy Spirit works for eternal purposes...The proper purpose of Pentecost is to get the wheels rolling for God in every church, thereby transporting the gospel across the face of the whole earth. 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' The church is a 'go' church, not a 'sit' church. Look *outwards*, to where our Lord is moving across the continents. Some are looking *inwards*, everlastingly examining their own souls, incapacitated by introspection. Jesus is saving you-don't you worry. Now start helping Him to save others. If the Holy Ghost has come, then be up and going. He does the work, not you or I. 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' And woe to them to whom we fail to preach it!"²⁸

"...the kind of evangelism that wins the world is Holy Ghost evangelism, which makes use of the weapons God has given for this task, namely the gifts of the Spirit...What are the works of God? They are not only conversions, or even healings. They include revelation, prophecy, supernatural knowledge, wisdom, discernment, dreams, visions and authority over the powers of Satan. Such are the aspects of our crusades and meetings which I feel have helped to attract the hundreds of thousands. People wake up to the reality of spiritual things when they see something that is beyond mere words. The gifts of the Spirit supply this slice of experience...To those whom He sends, He also gives this startling power and authority."²⁹

In these statements, Bonnke makes it clear that supernatural power and gifts are to be understood, not as a means for spiritual self-aggrandizement, but as weapons for evangelism. Power and privilege are bestowed on the Christian for the task of evangelism; however, this task appears to be the summation of the Christian's responsibility in the world. Bonnke's makes reference to no other Christian responsibility but evangelism:

"The Lord does not ask, 'Would you mind helping Me? I would like to invite you.' He says: 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain' (John 15.16). In this verse, He was not talking about the election to salvation, but rather of the election to service. We do not serve at our discretion. The Great Commission is a draft 'call-up', not a suggestion for our consideration."³⁰

"We are all praying for a mighty revival to sweep Europe and the rest of the world. Pray, pray on! But don't wait until it comes and gospel preaching then becomes easy. Get on with what you can do now. You can win thousands for Christ while

waiting for revival. And not only that, such action could be the start of a revival. It is true that revival is 'a sovereign act of God', as many believe. But it is equally true that revival can be caused...Revival takes anointed men and women of God who exercise the audacity of faith."³¹

We conclude that Bonnke perceives practically all of the Christian's privileges and responsibilities in the light of evangelism. The privileges associated with full gospel Christianity are to be employed for evangelistic purposes. As well, Christian responsibility is fully defined by the task of evangelism. Unlike the Hagins, Bonnke does more than hint at the Christian's responsibility to be engaged in evangelism; in fact, he presents it as an imperative. And yet, like the Hagins, Bonnke's definition of Christian responsibility does not appear to extend beyond proclamation evangelism.

Deeper Life

William Kumuyi's understanding of the balance between Christian privilege and responsibility is similar to that of Bonnke; a full range of privileges is paired with a single responsibility, evangelism. And yet, while Kumuyi shares Bonnke's unwavering enthusiasm for evangelism, he also shares Hagin's commitment to make known the rights and privileges of the Christian. Kumuyi's literature demonstrates both of these concerns; he has published books on topics pertaining to both evangelism and privileges.

The following selections representatively illustrate Kumuyi's concern to teach both Christian privileges and evangelism:

"When He [Jesus] finished the battle and overcame, he said, 'It is finished'. That is to say that everything the believer needs is made and perfected- 'finished'. Your inheritance is finished-made ready for you. Salvation is part of the inheritance. Sanctification is also a part of it. Holy Spirit baptism is part of it. Healing is part of the inheritance. And the Bible says 'we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. That is why we go to the Father boldly. Jesus Christ, with whom we are co-heirs, goes to the Father boldly so we ought to do. Be rest assured that you have an inheritance. To have your prayer answered, to keep your enemies subdued, to cast out demons, to remain healthy all the days of your life, to have a united family wherein peace reigns, to have children, to get healed of any sickness, to get restored if backslidden, to prosper and to overcome are yours. This is the inheritance passed unto you because of the Father's special love for you."³²

"Like Christ, the Church that is purchased by the Blood of Jesus, the true family of God will be seeking after sinners. They will be calling sinners, and saying, 'We have found the way, come let's go together; we have found peace, come and enjoy it with us; we have found the narrow way, the way to Heaven, come let's walk it together. The ministry of the Church (those who have found the way of life) is to seek the lost...That is why we go about telling our testimonies, sharing the word of God with the lost and inviting them to come into the Kingdom...I hope you are busy doing something for God, bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ because that is what the Lord wants you to do. The Lord wants us to labour and we must not rest. We must not fold our arms. It is necessary that the work be done now."³³

From these statements, we see that Kumuyi, like Bonnke and Hagin, understands the Christian to be chosen both for a host of tangible privileges and the single responsibility of evangelism. In defining privileges, Kumuyi practically echoes Hagin; in defining responsibility, Kumuyi echoes Bonnke. In sum, Kumuyi can be seen as combining a sweeping neo/pentecostal understanding of the Christian's privileges with a traditional evangelical and fundamentalist commitment to evangelism. Integral to the "abundant life" is the call to evangelism; in fact, the abundant life appears to hinge on one's obedience to the call. Finally, like Hagin and Bonnke, Kumuyi's definition of Christian duty appears to be limited to a single task, that being the call to world evangelisation.

YWAM

In neopentecostal circles, YWAM distinguishes itself by placing a greater emphasis on Christian responsibility than Christian privilege. While the YWAM literature alludes to several believers' benefits including Holy Spirit baptism and healing, it rarely develops them as such. The one privilege that YWAM does articulate fully is divine guidance. Floyd McClung writes:

"I am a firm believer in divine guidance. The Bible teaches that God cares about the choices we make in life and that He has specific plans for us in every important choice we make. We can learn to hear God's voice, though it is not always easy. God's plan for us begin with His purposes for all mankind (Ephesians 1.11), and extend to the specific purposes He has for us as individuals (Isaiah 46.11; Psalm 40.5; Acts 16.6)...We may not always be certain of our final destination, but we are always certain of how God wants us to conduct ourselves on the journey and we can be absolutely and totally confident of His love for us and His commitment to guide and direct our lives. Our ultimate victory is assured-as long as we keep our hearts open to the Lord Jesus Christ."³⁴

Among neopentecostals, YWAM's emphasis on Christian responsibility is exceptional. Not only is there a whole-hearted dedication to the task of world evangelisation, there is an inclusive definition and holistic dimension to its evangelism that reflects YWAM's different theology of mission. While YWAM's literature is mostly concerned with conveying evangelistic principles and strategies, it reflects, in the process, a holistic understanding of Christian responsibility:

"It [evangelism] is wider than handing out tracts or preaching on the streets; even though it includes that. It involves our entire life and how we choose to live it before others. Evangelism is also something we do when we actively share our faith. It involves drama and music, and meetings and conversation. It means standing for justice, and giving mercy, being thoughtful to a friend in need, and being available when someone is down. It is praying for the sick and confronting evil when others are oppressed."³⁵

"The agonising question of whether we should preach the gospel or care for the poor is not a biblical one. There is no dichotomy in the Scriptures between caring and preaching. People are created in God's image, body and soul. Therefore, we are to do both. Evangelists should not proclaim the gospel in situations where

there is no expression of commitment to the poor. They have a responsibility to identify with a caring community of believers so that their proclamation is seen to be part of Christ's concern for the felt needs of those they are preaching to."³⁶

"Governments are ordained by God for the good of mankind, and when they exploit and abuse their responsibilities and the people they govern, they must be held accountable both to God and to the people they serve. Obedience to the laws of God may lead us to disobey the laws of men, or to be in conflict with what we are asked to do by the rulers over us. We must be prepared as Christians to resist unrighteousness, corruption, prejudice, immorality, oppression, and every other form of evil."³⁷

Because its definition of evangelism is more inclusive than that of our other case study groups, YWAM has a larger understanding of Christian responsibility. Not only is evangelism understood in terms of obedience to a commission, it is also understood to include commitment to social justice. Consequently, YWAM sees the call to Christian responsibility to encompass most every dimension of human existence. Complementing this broad interpretation of Christian responsibility is a less pronounced, yet present, teaching of Christian privilege. In light of these facts, among our case study groups, YWAM appears to maintain the most orthodox balance between Christian privilege and responsibility.

ISSUES FOR THE CHURCH AND NEOPENTECOSTALISM

Issues that Neopentecostalism Raises for the Larger Church

The sustained growth of neopentecostalism raises an insistent question for the western Church about the place of miracle in Christian orthodoxy. The rationalistic tenor in the western Church has led to a distinct discomfort with the neopentecostal emphasis on miracles. Miracle has been relegated to the Apostolic Age by dispensationalism, and to the annals of superstitious or symbolic language by modern rationalism. Nevertheless, the rapidly increasing number of Christians, including western Christians, who claim to have experienced miraculous phenomena makes it proportionally more and more difficult to sweep miracle under the rug as myth or ancient hyperbole. There is, today, an increasingly influential segment of the Church is insisting that miracles of all kinds are an important and legitimate aspect of the Church's life and ministry.

Neopentecostals, of course, cite biblical precedent and God's consistent character and omnipotence as the case for contemporary miracle. As an integral part of the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles, miracle is understood to be binding for the ministry of the Church. That the Holy Spirit was poured out on the early Church at Pentecost is reason enough to believe that the same power is available for the latter Church.

The subject of miracles raises many questions. Is God really displaying biblical-style miraculous power at the end of the twentieth century? If so, does this mean that there are corresponding satanic powers at work? If so, how many of the miracles are real and how many are mere hoaxes? If so, how can they be understood in the light of scientific reasoning? At the local level, how can the Church best handle claims of the miraculous? Where is the balance between theological instruction and signs and wonders? Might neo/pentecostals have a role to perform in instructing the Church on the subject of miracles? These are difficult questions, but with the rise in the number of testimonies to spectacular physical healings, especially, they are questions with which the western Church is likely to be increasingly confronted.

By their ultimate aim of proclamation evangelism, neopentecostals raise the issue of the importance and priority of proclamation evangelism for the larger Church.³⁸ If, as Emilio Castro asserts, mission in the 1990s:

"...needs to concentrate on spreading the actual knowledge of the story of Jesus of Nazareth ...the telling of that story is our most urgent mission challenge today..."³⁹

then the Church would likely benefit by considering the neopentecostal emphasis on sharing the "simple gospel". From their literature one gains the distinct impression that neopentecostals are not afraid nor embarrassed to preach or talk about the person and work of Jesus Christ; in fact they are exhorted to bring up in daily conversation the love of God and the salvific work of Christ. Further, with their emphasis on Bible reading and memorisation, neopentecostals are likely to be ready to offer a spiritual word in a given circumstance. Although this simple methodology must see many people "fall through the cracks", it also appears to have an affect; neopentecostalism's steady to rapid growth rate cannot be entirely explained by population increases.

This, then, inevitably raises the issue of church growth. Especially in the 1990s, whether they acknowledge it or not, western churches, in particular, must be concerned with church growth, because without at least replacement numbers many of them face local extinction. Here the neopentecostal churches may be able to offer the Church a model for how to talk about Jesus.

Issues that the Larger Church Raises for Neopentecostalism

The Church, in turn, raises the growth issue for the neo/pentecostal movement. While it is true that neo/pentecostal churches are growing at a faster rate than most non-neo/pentecostal churches, this growth is largely occurring in areas where the larger Church,

also, is experiencing a steady growth rate. For example, in much of the two-thirds world, the Church is enjoying widespread popularity. The notable exception to this observation is the United States; here, neopentecostal churches are growing against a tide of overall Church membership loss. In this respect, the Church challenges the neo/pentecostal movement to penetrate and grow in the least-churched regions of the world, namely Western Europe and the Middle East.

Secondly, the larger Church, evangelical as well as conciliar, unanimously asserts that responsibility is at least as important, if not more important, than privilege in the life and witness of Church.⁴⁰ These responsibilities vary in kind, from the personal to the corporate and are to characterise the Christian way of life. The Church's insistence that there is more to the Christian life than converting people to seek after believer's benefits stands as a sharp rebuke to many in the neopentecostal movement.

The New Testament itself provides a complete counter-argument to those neopentecostals who choose to emphasise Christian privilege. Is there not, for every scripture that talks of the healing and abundant provision that one has "in Christ", another one that makes reference to the "expensive" path of the Christian life? A verse by verse comparison is not necessary to detect the overriding sense of Christian responsibility found in the New Testament; it is certainly as common a theme as privilege.⁴¹ In the light of New Testament teachings on responsibility and particularly in the light of the ministries of Jesus and the Apostles (most of whom earned the privilege of martyrdom), the neopentecostals' emphasis on the rights and privileges of the Christian is a disproportional one. At this juncture, the importance of the larger Church for the neopentecostal movement is that in its articulation of the various responsibilities incumbent upon the believer it may serve as a corrective.

Finally, of all the polemical issues that have been raised in this thesis none seems to carry more implications for the future of the larger Church than that of neopentecostalism's intrinsic independency. Because they represent an increasingly significant percentage of the Church's constituency, neopentecostals' voluntary ecclesiastical and missiological affiliations are likely to affect the future shape of the larger ecclesiastical skyline. Will neopentecostals continue to prefer, and at times even insist on, a closed circle of neo/pentecostal fellowship? Will they organise themselves into an effective world communion, and, if so, what shape might such a fellowship take and what type of influence might it exert? Would such a circle eventually be enlarged to include others such as evangelical, mainline, and even Catholic and Orthodox Christians?

While there are sensible and selfish reasons for remaining aloof from the wider Church, there are no ecclesiastical or theological defenses for such a posture. Because the Church is the earthly representation of the Body of Christ, for it to exist in a fragmented state, with independent islands of ecclesiastical activity, is tantamount to dismembering the Body. Newbigin and Robeck speak sharply against "island Christians". Newbigin writes:

"For those who are so consumed by evangelistic zeal that they have no patience with the old-established Churches and their unwillingness to change, it means being willing to recognise that Jesus is greater than the understanding of him that anyone has. It means, therefore, being willing to accept fully the fellow-discipleship of those whose style of Christian life and witness is very different from one's own, because if anyone truly confesses Jesus as Lord, then he or she-like it or not-is part of the body of Christ..."⁴²

Robeck remarks in a similar vein:

"Together, we could acknowledge the universal nature of the church allowing room for one another in it. This calls for an inclusive posture which recognises only one church, the church of Jesus Christ, including all who confess the name of Jesus Christ. The artificial walls which separate Christians often seem to have been constructed to preserve the status quo, to guarantee our own significance, or to enable us to enter into a form of denial which refuses to acknowledge the other as 'Christian'. While there is only one church, there is room for genuine diversity within it, and this diversity needs to be recognised and celebrated. Gender and racial differences have been enlisted to enhance our understanding of the church as embracing diversity within its midst; so too might denominational or movement loyalties. One need not fear second class status if she or he affirms the inclusive nature of the church..."⁴³

There are a number of reasons why the neo/pentecostals and the larger Church need, at the very least, to acknowledge one another. One is that their Bible tells them so.⁴⁴ Further, since all Christian confessions are selectively myopic in their interpretation of Christianity, they need the balancing perspective of each another; that church which ignores the larger Church faces the serious risk of heresy. As well, acknowledging and relating to the larger Church is necessary for keeping the ecclesiastical ego under control. No one part of the Church is more important than another. St. Paul reminds Christians that there are many member in the Body and all perform a different function. No part was created to function independently; indeed, each member needs the Body.

In the next and final chapter we conclude our examination of the neopentecostal missionary movement with a summary review of its elements and a proposal that neopentecostal missiology be considered a distinct, new model for missiological studies.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

As we recall from the preface, the ultimate purpose of this paper is to present a sketch of neopentecostal missiology. Chapters Three through Eight have been dedicated to this task. In this final chapter we summarize the thesis' findings as a whole and suggest that neopentecostal missiology represents a distinct, third missiological paradigm. It is argued that the neopentecostal paradigm merits both academic and theological consideration alongside the existing missiological paradigms, the ecumenical (mainline Protestant) 'presence' and evangelical 'proclamation' models.

Let us summarize the thesis' findings by addressing the fundamental question it raises: what is mission? More specifically, what is the neopentecostal interpretation of mission or what constitutes a neopentecostal missiology? Five distinct elements of a neopentecostal missiology can be identified.

The first element is a conservative hermeneutic. Neopentecostals believe the Bible to be God's literal, written Word and, as such, to be without error and literally interpreted. Unlike some conservative Christians (e.g. dispensationalists) and like pentecostals, neopentecostals believe that many specific biblical promises apply to Christians in every generation. For example, Scriptures such as these that refer to God's promises of material well-being to Old Testament Jews and Jesus' promises of supernatural powers to Christians are "claimed" by many contemporary neopentecostals:

"The Lord your God will make you more than prosperous in all that you do, in the fruit of your body and of your cattle and in the fruits of the earth; for, when you obey the Lord your God by keeping his commandments and statutes, as they are written in this book of the law, and when you turn back to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul, he will again rejoice over you and be good to you, as he rejoiced over your forefathers." (Deuteronomy 30.9-10)

"He [Jesus] now called the Twelve together and gave them the power and authority to overcome all the devils and to cure diseases, and sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." (Luke 9.1-2)

"In each of us the Spirit is manifested in one particular way, for some useful purpose. One man, through the Spirit, has the gift of wise speech, while another, by the power of the same Spirit, can put the deepest knowledge into words. Another, by the same Spirit, is granted faith; another, by the one Spirit, gifts of healing, and another miraculous powers; another has the gift of prophecy, and another ability to distinguish true spirits from false; yet another has the gift of ecstatic utterance of different kinds, and another the ability to interpret it. But all these gifts are the work of one and the same Spirit, distributing them separately to each individual at will." (1 Corinthians 12.7-11)¹

The logical outcome of these two presuppositions, biblical infallibility and biblical literalism is a distinct worldview extracted from the biblical text. Heaven and hell are actual destinations, angels and demons function as agents for their respective masters, and the Holy Spirit empowers Christians with supernatural abilities.

The neopentecostal universe is sharply dualistic, raging since its creation in a spiritual war between God and the Fallen Angel for the souls of humanity. "Spirit-filled" Christians constitute a third party in this cosmic drama. As agents of God's terrestrial army, these Christians intercede for the redemption and spiritual protection of individuals, families, and even entire cities and nations, "binding Satan" from his demonic ploys to lure people to linger in, and to love, evil. In summary, it can be said that those promises and miracles that the Godhead promised and performed in the Bible are those that neopentecostals believe the Godhead can and desires to repeat for the Church into the 21st century.

Prominent pneumatology is the second feature of a neopentecostal missiology. As in the pentecostal tradition, neopentecostals understand the Holy Spirit to be the *sine qua non*, the indispensable element of missiological success. While God sends the Spirit, and Jesus is the undisputed focus of the redemption story, it is the Holy Spirit's empowerment which neopentecostals believe is the vital ingredient in successful mission. The Holy Spirit is the "Πνεῦμα" that breathes life into the missiological task of proclaiming and demonstrating the love and power of God.

Miraculous events, which happen today just as they did in the Early Church, are believed by neopentecostals to be linked to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. When miracles occur, these are extant evidence that the Spirit is moving or hovering ("Πνεῦμα") over the congregation. Miracles often take place in the lives of the unconverted and sometimes are persuasive enough evidence of the supreme power of God over all other spiritual forces (a key theme in the two-thirds world) to convince the recipient to convert to Christianity. As we recall from Chapter Three, this process or "strategy" is termed the "evangelistic use of the charismata". Another, albeit less visibly spectacular, miracle attributed to the Holy Spirit is conversion itself. The Holy Spirit, then, is understood to be inextricably linked with the miraculous.

The Holy Spirit is also believed to empower Christians as agents of the miraculous, with the ultimate goal of "winning people to Christ". As we recall from Chapter Three, neopentecostals believe that all Christians are called to bear verbal witness of the saving power of Jesus Christ. As understood from texts such as 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, the Spirit bestows on each Christian at least one spiritual gift or supernatural ability. Those

gifted as prophets and healers are especially revered in the neopentecostal tradition. Not surprisingly then, those doubly gifted as healing evangelists are considered missiologically quintessential. In sum, neopentecostal missiology credits the Holy Spirit with the power associated with all spiritual gifts and miracles, including conversion; furthermore, a neopentecostal missiology assumes that the Holy Spirit functions today exactly as in the New Testament Church.

The third element of a neopentecostal missiology is a very active definition of the theological concepts, "evangelism" and "salvation". By equating corporate worship, healing, verbal witness, and personal blessing with the definitions of evangelism and salvation, neopentecostals are consistently engaged in spiritual activity. The active, socially-oriented quest for temporal justice and peace is widely absent in the neopentecostal interpretations of evangelism and salvation. It is accurate to say that neopentecostals are most keen to secure professions of faith and that the majority of their spiritual energy is channeled to this end.

"Active" well describes the neopentecostal understanding of evangelism. Evangelism always involves a "telling", is most always accompanied by a "showing", and often involves a "going". In other words, true evangelism *always* includes proclamation, whether it be sharing the Jesus story with a neighbour or preaching to a crusade crowd of 500.000. There can be no evangelism without a "κηρύγμα". Additionally, the full gospel message promises not just spiritual salubrity but physical wholeness as well. By holding healing services and soliciting testimonies from the miraculously healed, neopentecostals "show" the power of the gospel in action. Finally, as we recall from Chapter Three, the Great Commission is understood by neopentecostals (and other Christians) as a divine commandment "to go", cross-culturally and geographically, "to the uttermost parts" with the Jesus story. This commission to go is perceived as particularly pressing in relation to those countries with a small percentage of full gospel Christians.

Similarly, "active" well describes the neopentecostal interpretation of salvation. There is no spiritual salvation only; salvation is understood in much broader terms than just reserved seating in the heavenlies. Depending on the group and to varying degrees, neopentecostals actively offer and seek a salvation which can include release from both bodily and circumstantial ills. To some neopentecostals, a materially impoverished and cancer-ridden Christian is a two-pronged oxymoron. The "active" prayers for this person typically would include asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to the person all unconfessed sin that may be obstructing healing and wealth, and, in the name of Jesus, binding Satan's power over the person, and finally, in faith, claiming verbally the healing and blessings promised in various biblical texts. To other neopentecostals, material blessing takes a "theological backseat" to

healing; to these, salvation is perceived as a two-fold promise of spiritual and physical redemption. In any case, active, ambitious prayers for physical healing remains characteristic of the neopentecostal definition of salvation.

Souls, souls, souls. An overwhelming desire to gain converts for the kingdom of heaven is the fourth characteristic of a neopentecostal missiology. As we recall from Chapter Four, the ultimate aim of a neopentecostal theology of mission can be summarized in the neopentecostal ideal:

The neopentecostal ideal is that state of the world in which every individual alive at a particular point in history will have responded positively to the "full-gospel" as defined by the neo/pentecostal traditions. As full-gospel Christians, people will continue to live "victoriously in the Spirit".²

The priority then is, forsaking all costs, to bring people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The zeal for converts can be seen as the cornerstone of a neopentecostal theology of mission. As we recall from Chapter Three, our case study groups (with the exception of Rhema, especially in the USA) believe that the first priority of the Church as well as the individual believer is to be engaged in a 'proclamation plus signs and wonders' type of evangelism. This priority shapes and guides individual and corporate neopentecostal activity. Much as a Catholic mass implies the eucharist, the neopentecostal service implies the offer of salvation; we suggest that the salvation offer is to most neopentecostals what the Host is to Catholics. As a result, a verbal offer of salvation (with or without an altar call) is the crowning moment of virtually every type of neopentecostal gathering, whether it be Sunday worship, a revival or crusade, Bible study, prayer meeting, miracle service, or a social.

The neopentecostals' stated ultimate aim of winning Christian converts has been questioned and criticised in some countries, especially South Africa. As noted in Chapter Four, there is some concrete evidence to indicate that Rhema and Christ for All Nations have openly identified with the religious right in this country. Characteristically, neopentecostal missiology maintains, endorses, and even reinforces, a society's status quo; the conscience of a nation, it is not. At best, it can be said that neopentecostalism is apolitical. The obvious difficulty with Rhema and CfAN's political posture in South Africa is that the status quo is legally discriminatory. Resultantly, a dark cloud of suspicion and doubt hovers over these two organisations, casting a shadow on any pure missionary motives they possess.

The fifth and final characteristic of a neopentecostal missiology is a spiritually-based ecumenism. Distinct from both the liberal penchant for ecclesial unity and the evangelical penchant for doctrinal unity, the neopentecostal (like the pentecostal) desire for spiritual unity

is consistent with its finely-honed pneumatology. Neopentecostals prize the spiritual oneness of the body of Christ, a oneness attributed to the uniting power of the Holy Spirit and most distinctly expressed in a corporate worship setting.

A spiritually-focused ecumenism is most compatible with a neopentecostal theology of mission. In both organisational and doctrinal matters the Spirit holds first place. Let us explain. Believing that the Holy Spirit directs people to engage in particular ministries and in precise locales, neopentecostals exhibit a flexibility in determining their mission strategies. Respecting that any "Spirit-filled" believer can be so led means that neopentecostals are generally less concerned or surprised about overlapping or isolated mission activity than are their liberal and evangelical counterparts. To a neopentecostal, multiple ministries in one area could be an indication that the place is "white for the harvest". It may also be an opportunity to win non-pentecostal Christians to a "Spirit-filled" church.³ On the other side, neopentecostals generally believe that isolated mission work will also be fruitful, if it is of the Spirit's leading. Therefore, not only is it acceptable to neopentecostals to maintain organisational distinctions, it may also be desirable as there is a foundational respect for the Spirit's guidance in another's life.

As we know, doctrinally, pneumatology is the neopentecostal benchmark. While numerous other vital theological tenets are taught in neopentecostal circles, pneumatology consistently receives the most attention and press. For neopentecostals, generally, spiritual unity is unity enough. To invest significant time or money in the quest for either doctrinal or organisational unity is perceived as wasteful stewardship. Instead, these resources should be funding more direct evangelistic efforts.

In sum, we see that inherent in a neopentecostal missiology is great respect for the Holy Spirit's guidance. Ecumenically and in practice, that supernatural guidance takes precedence over either ecclesiastical or doctrinal oneness. The unity found in the Holy Spirit, then, is sufficient.

Finally, we want to suggest that neopentecostal missiology be considered a third missiological paradigm. From our understanding of its characteristics, how does neopentecostal missiology distinguish itself from the existing ecumenical 'presence' and evangelical 'proclamation' paradigms? At least two distinctions can be noted.

A neopentecostal missiology is most clearly distinguished from a characteristically mainline Protestant missiology by its insistence that the evangelical imperative is the spoken, not the incarnate, gospel. Where the mainline Christian usually prioritises a more subtle,

lifestyle evangelism, the neopentecostal Christian is more apt to prioritise a more direct proclamation evangelism. Incarnational Christianity is not irrelevant to the neopentecostal; it is, however, of secondary importance to the spoken gospel. Furthermore, justice and peace, believe the neopentecostal, are expected to increase proportionately with the percentage of Christians worldwide. Therefore, neopentecostals believe the absolute missiological priority is the conversion of the non-Christian population.

Although similar to an evangelical missiology in its priority on proclamation evangelism, a neopentecostal missiology distinguishes itself from the evangelical paradigm by its insistence on a visible proclamation, that is, a proclamation accompanied by signs and wonders. The evangelical presupposition is that the unadorned gospel, shared personally or preached corporately, is sufficiently powerful to convert.⁴ The neopentecostal presupposition is that the spoken gospel, while powerful and effective on its own, is most efficacious when its miraculous powers are unleashed in a personal or corporate setting. A neopentecostal missiology embraces the notion that preaching followed by a demonstration of healing and prophetic powers is a stronger evangelistic magnet than a sermon sans supernatural acts.

We conclude, then, that neopentecostal missiology is, indeed, a distinct third missiological paradigm. It contrasts sharply with the ecumenical 'presence' paradigm and goes beyond the evangelical 'proclamation' paradigm to assert that 'proclamation plus signs and wonders' is the ultimate missiological model for the Church.

We close with two comments on the necessity of taking neopentecostal missiology seriously. There is no doubt that some neopentecostalism is pure fabrication and that at other times it perches perilously close to the precipice of orthodoxy, flirting with the theological pleasures found in the chasm of heterodoxy. Nevertheless, two excellent reasons prompt us to take seriously neopentecostal missiology.

The first is practical. Because neopentecostalism calls itself Christian and because it is one of the most rapidly growing segments of the worldwide Church in the 1990s, its missiology requires serious ecclesiastical and academic consideration. What neopentecostals purport to believe needs to be known in the Church even as their increasing presence affects its very constitution. The Church must know something of those who claim membership in her.

The second is more theoretical. While characteristically, neopentecostalism does not strive to function as the conscience of a nation (which the Church should be), it may be that neopentecostalism functions as the conscience of the Church, raising those ancient,

nagging questions like: what about the Jesus story? and what about miracles? Both the western ecumenical propensity to put the Jesus story on the shelf and miracles in the dust bin and the evangelical propensity to put miracles on the shelf are forthrightly challenged by neopentecostals who, in the 1990s, preach a healing Jesus. In its literal gospel message and its assertions of the miraculous, neopentecostal missiology may prompt the Church to re-examine the contemporary power of the miraculous Jesus. This may well be neopentecostalism's greatest contribution to the Church.

NOTES TO CHAPTERS 1-9

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Pomerville, 1985, p. 11, illustrates this tendency; he uses the term "neopentecostal" but mentions parenthetically that "charismatic" is sometimes used.
- 2 For example, McClung, Jr., 1990, p. 154, uses the term "independent charismatic"; Lederle, 1982, p.37, uses the term "transdenominational" or "independent ministries"; and P.D Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 137, uses the term "Spirit-filled".
- 3 This is a point of some scholarly interest. R. Anderson, 1979, suggests that, in the first decade (or so) of the twentieth century, it was not tongues but "throbbing millenarianism" which characterized pentecostalism; since Christ's return was delayed tongues became more of a distinctive in the succeeding decades. Lederle, 1988, suggests that the pentecostal distinctive is "the experiencing of God's presence and power".
- 4 For a description of the various doctrines on Holy Spirit baptism within the charismatic movement see H. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of "Spirit-Baptism" in the Charismatic Renewal Movement* (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1 988).
- 5 Because mainline church members do participate in independent charismatic fellowships, the strict definition of "neopentecostal" includes only those members of independent charismatic (or pentecostal-like) churches.
- 6 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 137, notes that although its leadership often has had a past pentecostal connexion, neopentecostalism's clientele is drawn mostly from the mainline Protestant churches.
- 7 L. McClung, Jr., 1990, p. 154.
- 8 D. Barratt in Burgess, 1988, p. 811.
- 9 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 133.
- 10 The term "neo/pentecostal" is not ideal, but it does help to minimize verbiage.
- 11 There are some notable exceptions to this tendency, as, for example, Dallas Theological Seminary, which combines a dispensational theology with a fundamentalist hermeneutic.
- 12 Dunn, 1970, pp. 224-5.
- 13 Wesley, though, later modulated this stance from assurance as necessary to assurance as the privilege of every believer.
- 14 Langford, 1983, p. 36.
- 15 Jackson, 1831, p. 49.
- 16 Jackson, 1831, p. 329.
- 17 Gee, 1967, p. 5.
- 18 Palmer, 1860, pp. 101-2.
- 19 Torrey, 1898, pp. 270-2.
- 20 This thesis is argued by both R. Anderson, 1979, and E. Waldvogel, "The Overcoming Life: Reformed Evangelical Origins of Pentecostalism" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1985).
- 21 Gee, 1967, p.3.

- 22 J. Edwin Orr in Whittaker, 1990, p. 95.
- 23 J. Edwin Orr in Whittaker, 1990, p. 96.
- 24 Gee, 1967, p. 29.
- 25 C. M. Robeck, Jr. in Burgess, 1988, p.31.
- 26 This racial mixture was not to remain; whites soon split off. However, racial heterogeneity still characterizes many pentecostal churches today.
- 27 Bloch-Hoell, 1964, p. 67.
- 28 Gee, 1967, p. 22.
- 29 Gee, 1967, p. 22.
- 30 All statistics in this paragraph are taken from D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, pp. 811, 823. Cf. Appendices 1 and 2.
- 31 D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 813.
- 32 D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 824.
- 33 For a more complete version of the story see Durasoff, 1972, pp. 220-3.
- 34 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 276.
- 35 Hollenweger, 1974, p. 63.
- 36 McGee, 1988, pp. 58-9.
- 37 Pomerville, 1985, p. 56, points out that from the beginnings of the Assemblies of God, the denomination was considered to be a missionary movement; as evidence of this, he cites from its credal affirmation, the "Fundamental Truths", which contains a clear statement on mission.
- 38 D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 811, 823.
- 39 duPlessis, 1958, pp. 194-5.
- 40 D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 820.
- 41 H. V. Synan in Burgess, 1988, p. 781.
- 42 However, as R. Anderson, 1979, and others have pointed out the newer pentecostal sects have picked up and perpetuated this eschatological enthusiasm.
- 43 van Dusen, 1958, p. 124.
- 44 Parry, 1979, p. 7.
- 45 For a good discussion of the terminology used by both charismatics and pentecostals, Catholic and Protestant, see P. Hocken, "The Pentecostal Charismatic Movement as Revival and Renewal" (*Pneuma*, Spring 1981, pp. 31 - 47) .
- 46 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 131.
- 47 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 131.
- 48 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 130.
- 49 Bennett, 1970, pp. 82-3.
- 50 The exact size of the world-wide charismatic renewal is difficult to ascertain not only because terminology tends to overlap but because many charismatics leave the historic churches for classic pentecostal or neopentecostal churches.
- 51 Abbott, 1966, p. 30.
- 52 Laurentin, 1977, pp. 12-3.
- 53 Laurentin, 1977, pp. 12-3.

- 54 In his book, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, 1971), p.258, Edward O'Connor suggests that the primary reason for the Renewal Movement taking the shape of *parish* prayer groups is in the Catholic understanding of the Church: the community of followers which Christ gathered around himself was a concrete, historical community that has maintained its identity through all the vicissitudes of its history; therefore, separation from the visible Church is a matter of far more serious concern to Catholics than it is to Christians of most other persuasions.
- 55 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, pp. 144, 148, 154.
- 56 Culpepper, 1977, p. 13, quotes W. A. Criswell, past president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of the largest Baptist church in the world: "Wherever and whenever glossolalia appears, it is always hurtful and divisive. There is no exception to this. It is but another instrument for the tragic torture of the body of Christ. I have seen some of our finest churches torn apart by the practice".
- 57 P. D. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 141.
- 58 Harrell, Jr., 1975, p. 136.
- 59 In the Nigerian context, Hackett, 1987, p. 3, points out that these new religious movements, even if imports, *have been* contextualised to some degree. Her working definition of a new religious movement is "an indigenously created religious organisation stemming from social and religious encounter, and selecting and combining local and exogenous religious elements in diverse and dynamic ways." This definition tempers the "charges" that an imported religious movement can never be considered indigenous.
- 60 This is not to downplay the size of the classic pentecostal churches in Latin America; these churches, like neopentecostal churches, are experiencing a phenomenal rate of growth. C. P. Wagner in Burgess, 1988, p. 184ff., does acknowledge the fact, however, that not all neo/pentecostal churches are experiencing growth and that some non-neo/pentecostal churches are growing rapidly. Further, missiologists are divided on the relative significance of growth rate. The issue appears to boil down to the question of quantity versus quality. Fuller Theological Seminary's church growth missiology is committed to helping churches grow; growth appears to be a sure indicator that the number of Christians is increasing. This approach has been especially criticised by WCC missiologists. Arguing that numerical and organic growth in themselves do not necessarily mean that a church is growing, Costas, 1981, p. 6, discusses the fat church: "'ecclesial obesity' may preclude or at least cloud the presence of the kingdom". Bosch, 1988, p. 19, suggests that, especially in over-evangelised areas, what is called for is a demonstration of the authenticity of the Christian faith. Cf. also Newbigin, 1976, chapter nine.
- 61 Lederle, 1982, p. 37. For a study on the house church movement see A. Walker, *Restoring the Kingdom* (London, 1988);cf. also Higton and Kirby, 1988.
- 62 Brierly, 1988, p. 160.
- 63 D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 812.
- 64 Barrett, 1982, p. 6. There are at least two research organizations dedicated to the study of new religious movements. The most extensive, INTERACT Research Centre (Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, England, B29 6LQ), started its collection in the 1950s. The other is the Research Unit for New Religions and Independent Churches (NERMIC) which is under the auspices of the University of Zululand. It focuses on the many independent movements in southern, and particularly South, Africa. Its director is G. C. Oosthuizen (2 Jamison Drive, PO Westville 3630, R.S.A.). Cf. Appendices 3a-3d.
- 65 This is a well known characteristic of sectarian groups. As they mature there is often a wider sharing of leadership.

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 Hagin, 1984, p. 5.
- 2 Hagin, 1984, pp. 5-6.
- 3 Hagin, 1984, p. 6.
- 4 Hagin, 1984, pp. 6-7.
- 5 Hagin, 1984, p. 23.
- 6 Hagin, 1984, pp. 24-5.
- 7 Hagin, 1984, p. 26. For another account of Hagin's pentecostal experience see Hagin, 1974b, pp.5-10.
- 8 Burgess, 1988, p. 11, defines *anointing* as "a metaphor for the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, special favour, or divine commission". McCauley, 1988, pp.1-4 and 1989, chapter seven also stresses the importance of having "the anointing".
- 9 McConnell, 1988, p. 60.
- 10 For the full account of this particular vision see Hagin, 1984, pp.66-87.
- 11 Hagin, 1984, p. 47.
- 12 Hagin, 1984, p. 122.
- 13 Hagin, 1984, p. 129.
- 14 Hagin, 1984, pp. 100-1.
- 15 Hagin, 1984, p.47.
- 16 Rhema Bible Training Center prospectus, 1988, p. 5.
- 17 L. Lovett in Burgess, 1988, p. 718.
- 18 L. Lovett in Burgess, 1988, p. 719.
- 19 Hagin, 1986b, pp. 22-3.
- 20 Hagin, 1979b, pp. 5, 32, 5-6; cf. also Hagin, 1974a, pp.29-34.
- 21 Hagin, 1983b, p. 15 and 1979b, p. 128; cf. also Hagin, 1989, pp.6-12, 1986a and Hagin,Jr., 1989. See Appendix 6.
- 22 As quoted in Steele, 1986b, p. 137.
- 23 As quoted in McConnell, 1988, p. 175.
- 24 This is a murky topic. Hagin's allusions to revelation knowledge being on a par with Scripture have evoked criticism. McConnell, 1988, chapter six, questions the orthodoxy of revelation knowledge; Barron, 1987, pp.118-20, questions the implications of its use.
- 25 See Farah, Jr., 1981.
- 26 The most complete critique is in McConnell, 1988. The footnotes in Neuman, 1990 are a good bibliographic source of additional critique from within the pentecostal and charismatic movements.
- 27 Rhema's congregation. like many neopentecostal churches, has a higher than average racial mix.
- 28 Isaacson, 1990, p. 39.
- 29 Turner, 1967, p. 4.

- 30 Isaacson, 1990, p. 60.
- 31 See Isaacson, 1990, p. 60 and Ojo, 1988b, p. 144.
- 32 Isaacson, 1990, p. 60.
- 33 Ojo, 1988b, p. 145.
- 34 Cf. Ojo, 1988b, p. 144.
- 35 As quoted in Ojo, 1988b, p. 145.
- 36 See Isaacson, 1990, p. 123ff.
- 37 Ojo, 1986, p. 290, notes that publicity has characterised Deeper Life from its earliest days.
- 38 Ojo, 1988b, p. 149, remarks that the members of the Christian Union and Student Christian Movement who had joined the Deeper Life Campus Fellowship later refused to have any association with the existing Christian campus organizations. This separatist stance has aided the existing allegations of exclusivism and a superiority complex among Deeper Life members.
- 39 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 18, 110.
- 40 Kumuyi, 1985a, pp. 28, 29.
- 41 Kumuyi, 1985a, p. 17.
- 42 Isaacson, 1990, p. 145, found though that some of Deeper Life's regional ministers came close to advocating a 'sinless perfection'.
- 43 Kumuyi, 1985a, p. 30.
- 44 Isaacson, 1990, p. 64.
- 45 Isaacson, 1990, p. 58.
- 46 Ojo, 1988b, p.156, offers one explanation for this contemporary emphasis on healing, suggesting that it is being presented as an alternative to the inadequate health services in Nigeria. As well, poverty precludes many Nigerians from seeking any type of health services; Kumuyi see healing as a divine gift affordable to all.
- 47 As in most, if not every African society, the reality of the spirit world is considered common knowledge.
- 48 Isaacson, 1990, p. 112.
- 49 Kumuyi, 1990a, p. 9.
- 50 Kumuyi, 1990a, p. 5.
- 51 Kumuyi, 1990a, p. 7.
- 52 Kumuyi, 1990a, pp. 28-30.
- 53 Kumuyi, 1986b, pp. 5, 6.
- 54 Kumuyi, 1986b, pp. 20, 27, 29, 30.
- 55 Ojo, 1986, p. 303.
- 56 Isaacson, 1990, p. 105.
- 57 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 105-6.
- 58 Isaacson, 1990, p. 67.
- 59 Ojo, 1986, p. 305.
- 60 See chapter four in Isaacson, 1990, for stories illustrating this point.
- 61 Isaacson, 1990, p. 186.
- 62 Isaacson, 1990, p. 16.

- 63 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 17, 63, suggests that this may be a kind of counter- reaction to some of the independent churches. That Kumuyi has spent almost all of his life affiliated with academic institutions (which prize discipline and rationality) must also figure into an assessment of Deeper Life's style of worship.
- 64 Isaacson, 1990, p. 110.
- 65 Ojo, 1988, p. 146.
- 66 Isaacson, 1990, p. 149.
- 67 Ojo, 1988, p. 149.
- 68 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 113-4.
- 69 Isaacson, 1990, p. 18.
- 70 See Ojo, 1986, pp. 290, 299, who heats up on this topic, arguing that Christians have been the primary target of Deeper Life's evangelistic efforts. It might prove more fruitful to ask *why* this has been the case. One reason may be that the vast majority of Nigerians already claim an affiliation with Islam or with a Christian denomination; this means that Deeper Life converts are likely, statistically, to be either "stolen" Muslims or "stolen" Christians.
- 71 F. McClung, Jr., 1988, p. 236.
- 72 Cunningham, 1984, p. 141.
- 73 These statistics are culled from "Operating Location Profile, 1980-1989", p. 1 and *World Christian News*, December 1990, p. 1. See Appendix 3c.
- 74 Cunningham, 1984, p. 17.
- 75 Cunningham, 1984, pp. 17-8.
- 76 Cunningham, 1984, p. 21.
- 77 Cunningham, 1984, p. 28.
- 78 Cunningham, 1984, p. 33.
- 79 Cunningham, 1984, p. 34.
- 80 Cunningham, 1984, p.141.
- 81 F. McClung, Jr., 1988, p. 236.
- 82 Cunningham, 1984, p. 153.
- 83 F. McClung, Jr., 1988a, pp. 41-2, 44-5.
- 84 Cunningham, 1984, p. 111.
- 85 Cunningham, 1984, p.154.
- 86 Cunningham, 1984, pp. 68-9.
- 87 Cunningham, 1984, p. 154.
- 88 F. McClung, Jr., 1988e, cites a number of such specific incidents.
- 89 Cunningham, 1984, p. 91.
- 90 Cunningham, 1984, p. 83; cf. also Cunningham, 1988, pp.21-2.
- 91 F. McClung, Jr., 1988, pp. 230, 201.
- 92 Information in this paragraph taken from a letter to the author, dated 22 February 1991. YWAM's view of its relationship to the local church will be discussed in chapter four.
- 93 See, for example, Lehmann, 1988 and F. McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989.
- 94 Cunningham, 1984, p. 150.

- 95 "Operating Location Profile, 1980-1989", p. 3. "Internationalisation" appears to be a trend within evangelical mission agencies. Pate, 1986, p. 159, suggests that this trend reflects one western response to the rising interest in missions in non-western countries. Stoll, 1990, sees the trend toward "internationalisation" as a response to pressure put on the western based agencies from non-western Christians. A combination of both reasons seems the most likely explanation.
- 96 *Revival Report* 4: 2/90.
- 97 The Federation of Free Pentecostal Churches is known in Germany as the Bund Freier Pfingstmeinden or BFP.
- 98 Steele, 1984, p. 19.
- 99 Steele, 1984, pp. 19-20.
- 100 Steele. 1984, p. 26.
- 101 See chapter three in Steele, 1984.
- 102 Bonnke, 1989, p. 5.
- 103 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 38-9.
- 104 Steele, 1984, pp. 48-9.
- 105 Steele, 1984, p. 82.
- 106 Bonnke, 1989, p. 142.
- 107 Bonnke, 1989, p. 88.
- 108 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 76, 75.
- 109 Bonnke, 1989, p. 34.
- 110 Bonnke, 1989, pp.116-7.
- 111 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 34-5.
- 112 Bonnke, 1989, p. 11.
- 113 Bonnke, 1989, p. 120.
- 114 Steele, 1984, p. 176.
- 115 As quoted in Steele, 1986a, pp. 160-1.
- 116 Steele, 1986a, p. 56.
- 117 For a description of this vision see Steele, 1984, pp. 122-3.
- 118 Bonnke, 1989, p. 217.
- 119 Gifford, 1987, remarks, however, that the Harare newspaper, the *Sunday Mail* (17 November 1985) reported that the Zimbabwe Christian Council (ZCC) were very concerned about four crusading bodies in their country; it was an open secret that Christ for All Nations was one of the four. The ZCC secretary-general questioned, among other things, their sources of income. One result of the ZCC inquiry seems to have been the lack of state-controlled media coverage for the 1986 "Fire Conference"; in contrast, there was extensive coverage of Bonnke's 1980 crusade in Harare.
- 120 Taken from a 1990 Christ for All Nations promotional brochure. Cf. also Appendix 9.
- 121 In a letter to the author dated 1 May 1991, Christ for All Nations mentions that the Church Participation Programme "contributes just over one-fifth of the total amount donated from the United Kingdom towards the costs of the Crusades". Cf. also Appendix 10.

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Adams, 1987, pp. 9-10.
- 2 Hagin, 1979b, p. 120.
- 3 Bonnke, 1989, p. 11.
- 4 Kumuyi, 1990a, pp. 12,13.
- 5 Cf. Hagin, 1979b, p. 17ff.
- 6 Hagin, 1983b, p. 1.
- 7 Kumuyi, 1990a, p. 6.
- 8 Kumuyi, 1990a, pp. 7, 11.
- 9 Hagin, 1979b, pp. 55-6, 58, 59.
- 10 F. McClung, Jr., 1990b, pp. 27, 29, 36-7.
- 11 L. Cunningham in Fountain, 1987, p. 149 and Cunningham, 1988, p. 132, respectively.
- 12 *The Word of Faith* magazine, November 1990, p. 5.
- 13 Kumuyi, 1985b, pp. 31-2, 33, 37, 40. Cf. Christ for All Nations' Vice Chairman, Peter Vandenberg who argues in *Revival Report* 1/89E, pp. 8-9, that Christian prosperity should be channeled for evangelistic, not materialistic ends: "In some areas materialism has pushed spiritual concepts right out of the door and the 'Church Triumphant' has become the 'Church Possessive!' The 'Sacrificial Missions Programme' in many cases has been replaced by the 'Bigger and Better Building Programme'. The Lord never intended that His Church should strive to be prosperous in the material sense, but that it should be so prosperous in the spiritual realm that the very 'gates of Hell would not prevail against it!'" Naturally, as a mission executive Vandenberg is concerned to see money contributed to the missionary cause; the prosperity emphasis in some churches appears to mitigate against this.
- 14 A case for suffering for Hrighteousness' sake" or persecution for witnessing is made by Hagin, 1982b, chapters three and four and Kumuyi, 1990b, p. 21 and 1986d, chapter nine.
- 15 Bonnke, 1989, p. 53.
- 16 See, for example, Appendices 4 and 8.
- 17 G. Fee in Spittler, 1976, p. 121.
- 18 Reading almost any neopentecostal literature amply demonstrates this point. Many of their magazine articles are, in fact, biblical expositions on a particular topic.
- 19 Spittler, 1988, pp. 418-9.
- 20 Bloch-Hoell, 1964, p. 21.
- 21 The author has received written documentation on such attitudes of spiritual superiority pertaining to a Rhema congregation in Zimbabwe.
- 22 Ojo, 1988b, p. 146.
- 23 Cf. Isaacson, 1990, p. 106ff. and Hagin, 1985, p. 1ff.
- 24 Farah, Jr., 1981, p. 15.
- 25 Hagin, 1985a, p. 1.

- 26 Hagin, 1985a, p. 2.
- 27 See Hagin, 1983a, p. 16ff.
- 28 Pillay, 1985, p. 29.
- 29 "Manila Covenant", paragraph nineteen.
- 30 Kumuyi, 1985a, pp. 24, 25.
- 31 Kumuyi, 1985a, p. 29.
- 32 Hagin, 1979b, pp. 63, 64, 65, 68, 69.
- 33 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 54-5, 91.
- 34 Volf, 1989, presents an interesting case for the similarity of liberation and pentecostal soteriologies in that both emphasise the materiality of salvation. He states (p. 448) that: "Salvation is not merely a spiritual reality touching only an individual person's inner being but also has to do with *bodily* human existence. Moreover, for both theologies the materiality of salvation is not a marginal theme but an essential constituent. It is the stress on experiencing salvation in sociopolitical liberation, coupled with the insistence on a particular kind of hermeneutic, that constitutes the *different specifica* of liberation theology. The materiality of salvation is no less important in pentecostal theology. Most Pentecostals would agree with the preacher who called the doctrine of divine healing of the body 'the Neglected Half of the Gospel'".
- 35 In comparison, note the relatively small amount of Pentecostal critique written by more liberal scholars. One explanation for this is that liberals, as a group, are so theologically distant from pentecostalism that there is little need for comment.
- 36 Stott, 1975, pp. 83-5.
- 37 Lehmann, 1988, pp. 7-8.
- 38 *Deeper Life*, November 1989, p. 1.
- 39 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 63-4.
- 40 *The Word of Faith*, March 1991, pp. 5, 6.
- 41 Hagin, Jr., 1981, pp. 15, 16, 18.
- 42 See Isaacson, 1990, chapter six.
- 43 Newbiggin, 1978, p. 8.
- 44 L. Cunningham in Fountain, 1987, pp.17-8.
- 45 *Deeper Life*, February 1990, pp. 6, 7.
- 46 F. McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989, p. 17.
- 47 Stoll, 1990, p. 37. In the same piece, Stoll suggests, p. 24, that "looking at the world in terms of unreached people groups not only multiplied the need for missionaries but also made the task of finishing the Great Commission seem within reach...By the early 1980s, therefore, much of the [evangelical] missions movement was pushing the hidden peoples as a recruitment and fund-raising device." This is a statistical way by which those in the evangelical tradition have been able to get around the "presence of a national church" argument. However, must evangelicals (or any others) desirous of engaging in evangelism have to defend their desire to share the gospel? Yet, then, the issues of motivations, partnership, training, and cultural sensitivity must be raised...
- 48 O. Cullman in Davies and Daube, 1956, p. 421.
- 49 Ojo, 1988, p. 186.
- 50 "Manila Covenant", paragraph six.
- 51 F. McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989, p. 55.

- 52 Lehmann, 1988, p. 42.
- 53 Cf. Stoll, 1990, chapter four.
- 54 Steele, 1986a, pp. 173-4. Also cf. Isaacson, 1990, p. 185. For some good reasons, this approach is scorned by WCC theologians; however, at the same time, it appears that contemporary liberal preaching concentrates on the necessity of social involvement at the expense of the reinforcement of personal morality. It is not unreasonable to believe that people may find it more difficult to live upright lives as individuals than they will to participate in a cause which does not affect their private affairs.
- 55 Isaacson, 1990, p. 185.
- 56 Lehmann, 1988, p. 42.
- 57 Pomerville, 1985, p. 151.
- 58 Pomerville, 1985, p. 155; cf. Clark and Lederle, 1989, chapter seven, who distinguish between pentecostals' social and political involvement.
- 59 Hollenweger and others have raised concerns about the "New Testament Church" paradigm promoted in neo/pentecostal circles. The problem is that there are in the New Testament different understandings of the church, not just a single paradigm. Beyond the book of Acts, both the book of John and the Pauline Epistles present descriptions of the church. Therefore, it is not entirely clear what is meant when an ecclesiastical community claims to be, or calls for the establishment of, a New Testament church. However, knowing as we do that neopentecostalism reflects a pentecostal heritage, we can surmise that the neopentecostal model of a "New Testament" church will be drawn mostly from the Acts of the Apostles.
- 60 F. McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989, p 24.
- 61 See the document, "Discipling the Nations: Ten Reasons Why YWAM Plants Churches", 1 990.
- 62 *Revival Report*, E/9OE, pp. 2-3.
- 63 Hagin, Jr., 1981, p. 15.
- 64 Kumuyi, 1 990b, p. 19.
- 65 Kumuyi, 1990b, pp. 19, 20.
- 66 McClung, Jr., F. and Moala, 1989, p. 135.
- 67 McClung, Jr., F. and Moala, 1989, pp. 135-9.
- 68 McClung, Jr., F., 1990, p. 11.
- 69 F. Wilson, 1990, p. 33.
- 70 Newbigin, 1982, pp. 149-50.
- 71 Neopentecostal literature is packed with statistics, from the numbers of the unsaved to the numbers of conversions at a single crusade. YWAM's literature on mission strategy and Bonnke's crusade reports are full of such statistics.
- 72 Although a world-wide estimate of the dropout rate in neopentecostal churches is not known, it may likely compare to attrition rates in the charismatic renewal. D. Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 811, estimates that the average involvement in the renewal is only two to three years.
- 73 *The Word of Faith*, August 1989, pp. 14,17.
- 74 Hagin, 1979b, p. 68.
- 75 As quoted in Isaacson, 1990, p. 146.
- 76 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 67-8.

- 77 Lehmann, 1988, pp. 10-11.
- 78 Pomerville, 1985, pp. 162-3.
- 79 W. MacDonald in Spittler, 1975, p. 59.
- 80 L. McClung, Jr., 1986, p. 11.
- 81 L. McClung, Jr., 1986, p. 11.
- 82 L. McClung, Jr., 1986, p. 11.
- 83 This is not exclusive to neopentecostalism. For example, African Christians, in both the independent *and* mission church traditions, speak regularly of being led by divine visions.
- 84 C. Pinnock in Spittler, 1976, p. 191.
- 85 See also Bruner, 1970, p. 33.
- 86 Pomerville, 1985, p. 63.
- 87 Pomerville, 1985, p. 74.
- 88 Many of Malawi's Presbyterians and Zimbabwe's Methodists illustrate the "indigenisation" of the Holy Spirit in mission churches. Neither mission originally stressed pneumatology, yet many of their adherents demonstrate (from a western perspective) a pentecostal-like understanding of the Holy Spirit in their emphases on visions and healings. This also helps to explain why there are dancing Presbyterians in Malawi!
- 89 *The Word of Faith*, April 1991, pp. 5, 6.
- 90 Bonnke, 1989, p. 11.
- 91 Lehmann, 1988, pp. 10-11.
- 92 L. Cunningham in Fountain, 1987, p. 17.
- 93 Kumuyi, 1990b, p. 46.
- 94 Hollenweger, 1972, p. 417.
- 95 Cf. the end times portents in Matthew 24-25 and Acts 1.3-5. Stoll, 1990, p. 64, observes that among Latin American evangelicals there may be a shift from a premillennialist to a "dominion" or "kingdom" theology. Instead of Christ returning to a remnant, He would, in "kingdom" theology: "return to a world occupied and redeemed in anticipation of His coming; the Great Commission would only be fulfilled when the gospel held direct sway over every government and the majority of the earth's population had accepted Christ". This sounds much like classic postmillennialism. Whether neopentecostals will adopt such an eschatology remains to be seen.
- 96 Shorter, 1988, p. 11.
- 97 Bonnke, 1989, p. 89.
- 98 F. McClung, Jr., 1988, p. 228.
- 99 We examine these various strategies in Chapter Five.
- 100 Ojo, 1988a, p. 175. Cf. Bosch in Castro, Bosch, and McClung, 1990, p. 149 who observes "that every living theology is by nature a *contextual* theology". How, though, does the Church discern between theologies which are "contextualised" and those which have succumbed to the temptation of what Bosch calls "contextualism-where 'God' is reduced to and identified with the historical process"?
- 101 Hodges, 1977, p. 142.
- 102 Pragmatically, some versions of the neopentecostal gospel can be seen as promising something for (nearly) nothing.

- 103 A. Anderson, 1987, p. 79.
- 104 A. Anderson mentions the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa's "Papers for General Assembly", 1986. See also Gifford, 1988 and *The Kairos Document: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa*,
- 105 M. Marty in Synan, 1975, pp. 224-5.
- 106 Marketing techniques are especially crucial in American religion, and Hagin has made his name by preaching a gospel of prosperity. A serious addressing of contemporary social issues is unlikely and, from Hagin's perspective, financially unwise.
- 107 R. Padilla in G. Anderson, 1975, p. 49.
- 108 Pannell, 1988, pp. 21-2.
- 109 Cf. Newbigin, 1978, p. 19.

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 H. Kung in G. Anderson, 1974, pp. 101-2.
- 2 Bonnke, 1989, p. 55.
- 3 F. McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989, pp. 16-7.
- 4 Kumuyi, 1990b, pp. 34, 35.
- 5 Hagin, 1979, pp. 119-20.
- 6 *The Word of Faith*, April 1991, pp. 5-6. Cf. in this issue Hagin, Sr's. article entitled "Faith is Acting on God's Word".
- 7 *Revival Report A/91 E*, p. 9. See also Bonnke, 1989, pp. 125-6.
- 8 Kumuyi, 1990b, pp. 8, 9.
- 9 Lehmann, 1988, pp. 7-8.
- 10 *The Word of Faith*, April 1991, p. 6.
- 11 Cf. the strategy outlined in McClung, Jr., F. and Moala, 1989.
- 12 *The Word of Faith*, April 1991, p. 6.
- 13 Lehmann, 1988, p. 11.
- 14 *Deeper Life*, November 1989, p. 7.
- 15 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 31-2.
- 16 Boer, 1961, pp. 24-6.
- 17 See, for example, the introductory paragraph of the Lausanne Covenant and Hodges, 1977, p. 172.
- 18 For a discussion of the influence of Roland Allen see C. Long and A. Rowthorn, "The Legacy of Roland Allen" (*International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, April 1989, pp. 65-70) and G. McGee, "Assemblies of God Mission Theology: A Historical Perspective" (*International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, October 1986, pp. 166-70). David Bosch picks up on this theme of Allen's and does an exegesis of the Great Commission in his "The Structure of Mission: An Exposition of Matthew 28.16-20" in W. Shenk, ed., *Exploring Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, 1983).
- 19 Allen, 1913, pp. 30-2.
- 20 Allen, 1913, pp. 55-6, 45. The motive of compassion, or love, is also seriously considered by Stamoolis, 1986, chapter ten.
- 21 Hagin, Jr., 1981, pp. 15-6.
- 22 See, for example, "Crusaders on the Warpath" (*South*, December 1988, p. 28) .
- 23 Bonnke's viewpoint is recorded in Steele, 1984; a fuller criticism of Bonnke's actions is found in Gifford, 1988, p. 41ff.
- 24 *Evangelical Witness in South Africa*, 1986, p. 34.
- 25 As quoted in Steele, 1986b, p. 171.
- 26 McCauley, 1989, pp. 51-2.
- 27 Steele, 1984, p. 192. However, in *Revival Report*, F/9OE, p.9, Bonnke highlights the importance of Israel in God's plan for history. In citing Scriptures that have been fulfilled in relation to Israel, Bonnke espouses a favourite notion of the religious right. Along

with the audiences Bonnke has had with conservative black South Africans, this suggests Bonnke's underlying conservatism.

- 28 *Revival Report*, F/9OE, p. 3. Bonnke and McCauley's apoliticism is not dissimilar to the apolitical stance taken by American Methodists on the issue of slavery. Methodist ministers in the South knew that by speaking out against slavery they would lose their opportunity to minister at all.
- 29 Gifford, 1988, pp. 42, 45.
- 30 Newbiggin, 1986, chapter six, develops well this argument.
- 31 Stoll, 1990, pp. 156-7.
- 32 Cf. the critiques permeating *Evangelical Witness in South Africa*, 1986; Gifford, 1988; and Stoll, 1990.

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 McGee, 1988, among others, discusses this point.
- 2 Rhema's more integrated congregation near Johannesburg might be mentioned as an exception; however, Rhema's theology almost assures that its constituency, of whatever colour, is politically conservative.
- 3 See, for example, both Cunningham's piece, "We Can Do It!" in Fountain, 1987 and F. McClung, Jr., 1990.
- 4 Steele, 1986, pp. 162-3.
- 5 *Revival Report*, E/9OE, p. 2.
- 6 *Revival Report*, E/9OE, p. 8. There is also, normally, one additional crusade per year beyond Africa, usually in Asia.
- 7 Their rationale for this order is that non-Christians in the third world, especially parts of Asia, have less opportunity to hear the gospel than nonChristians in the western world. This notion has, however, lost its validity in most of Africa and Latin America (and even pockets of Asia such as the Pacific Islands and Korea) where there are large percentages of Christians.
- 8 "Target 2000: All Nations All Peoples", 1988, p. 2.
- 9 "Target 2000: All Nations All Peoples", 1988, p. 5.
- 10 See, for example, the study by M. Poloma and B. Pendelton, "Religious Experiences, Evangelism, and Institutional Growth within the Assemblies of God" (*Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 1989, 28 (4): 415-31).
- 11 Synan, 1987, pp. 39-40.
- 12 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 83, 84, 85. It is interesting to note at this point that this type of preaching sometimes causes consternation for African churches. For example, in Malawi, Rev. Tom Colvin of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian reported that Bonnke's message nearly split the hosting Association of Evangelical Churches. Subsequently, the Malawian government has banned Bonnke from returning to the country.
- 13 Isaacson, 1990, p. 150.
- 14 Ojo, 1988b, p. 157.
- 15 Lehmann, 1988, pp. 43-4, 45-6.
- 16 Lehmann, 1988, p. 46.
- 17 Lehmann, 1988, p. 46.
- 18 *The Word of Faith*, March 1991, p. 6.
- 19 Packer, 1989, pp. 20-1.
- 20 See, for example, Appendix 10.
- 21 Allen, 1912, pp. 60, 61, 63, 66.
- 22 R. Anderson, 1979, p. 77.
- 23 Kumuyi, 1990b, p. 28.
- 24 Lehmann, 1988, p. 70.
- 25 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 9, 12.

- 26 As quoted in Stoll, 1990, p. 36.
- 27 *The Word of Faith*, April 199, p. 6.
- 28 Bonnke, 1989, p. 70.
- 29 *Deeper Life*, November 1989, pp. 7, 1.
- 30 McClung, Jr., F. and Moala, 1989, p. 21.
- 31 M. Kelsey in Spittler, 1976, p. 223.
- 32 W. MacDonald in Spittler, 1976, p. 61.
- 33 See, for example, Steele, 1986b, chapter 13, which is entitled "The Music of Revival".
- 34 Sepulveda, 1989, p. 86.
- 35 It must also be mentioned that lay leadership and evangelism are integral to the ministry of many churches, of all denominations, in the two-thirds world. For example, A. C. Ross notes that Malawi's more rural Presbyterian churches are run almost entirely by the laity, with only a "circuit" clergy.
- 36 W. MacDonald in Spittler, 1976, p. 67.
- 37 Gifford, 1987, p. 67.
- 38 Bonnke, 1989, p. 99.
- 39 Bonnke, 1989, p. 219.
- 40 *Revival Report*, F/90E, p. 10 and 1/89-E, p. 4. It would be interesting to compare Bonnke's follow-up statistics with those of other itinerant evangelists.
- 41 *Revival Report*, F/90E, p. 5.
- 42 *Revival Report*, C/90E, p. 4.
- 43 Traditionally, dreams and visions are taken seriously by most Africans, whatever their religion; cf. Lartley, 1986. That they are taken seriously within most African mainline churches today is also a well-known fact.
- 44 Hollenweger, 1978, p. 39. Particularly for a neopentecostal group, Rhema maintains a significant literary as well as an oral-aural base; cf. Appendix 5.
- 45 R. Gause in Spittler, 1976, p. 114.
- 46 Packer, 1989, p. 18.
- 47 Packer, 1989, p. 21.
- 48 Functional illiteracy is an alarming 20% in the United States alone; other national totals are much higher.
- 49 In fact, the *necessity* of lay participation has been pointed out by A. C. Ross; there is simply a shortage of clergy in the Malawian Presbyterian church. Cf. also Appendix 2.
- 50 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 74, 39-40.
- 51 Lehmann, 1988, p. 8.
- 52 Ojo, 1 988b, p. 154.
- 53 Hagin, Jr., 1981, p. 7. Approximately every second month, *The Word of Faith* reports on the USA or overseas ministry of one or more Rhema graduates. This, coupled with a more substantial periodical entitled *Rhema International Report*, is practically the sum of Rhema's attention to mission topics. Neither Hagin nor Hagin, Jr. appear to write solely on the evangelistic nature or task of the Church. The October 1990 issue of the *Rhema International Report* featured 112 missionaries working beyond North America as well as 166 itinerants based in the United States.
- 54 F. McClung, Jr., 1988, pp. 178, 201.

- 55 The YWAM literature itself highlights some of YWAM's strategical blunders.
- 56 Cf. "Manila Covenant", paragraph two.
- 57 "Manila Covenant", paragraph eight.
- 58 Bonnke, 1989, p. 12.
- 59 See Hagin, 1983d, pp. 2, 65.
- 60 Noted from the Rhema Bible Church bulletin of that month and year.
- 61 See *The Word of Faith*, August 1989, p. 21; September 1989, p. 12, and May 1990, p. 12.
- 62 Isaacson, 1990, p. 102.
- 63 Isaacson, 1990, p. 101.
- 64 C. Barfoot and G. Sheppard, "Prophetic versus Priestly Religion: The Changing Role of Women Clergy in Classic Pentecostal Churches" (*Review of Religious Research*, September 1980, pp. 2-17) conclude that women pentecostals are less likely now than in the past to hold positions of leadership and that this is due, in large part, to the institutionalisation of the classic pentecostal churches. (In the western world, there is no woman who directs a denomination like Aimee Semple McPherson did the Foursquare Church). See also S. Kwilecki, "Contemporary Pentecostal Clergywomen" (*Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Fall 1987, pp. 57-75).
- 65 F. Wilson, 1990, p. 75.
- 66 Boer, 1961, pp. 205-77.
- 67 See Boer, 1961, p. 224ff. At the same time, he also points out several of pentecostalism's theological shortcomings.
- 68 Boer, 1961, p. 226.
- 69 Neo/pentecostalism's anti-intellectual bias has only exacerbated the situation.
- 70 Bosch, 1980, gives a good overview of these two strategies.
- 71 F. Wilson, 1990, pp. 70-1.
- 72 Several years ago Fuller Seminary offered its first course on "signs and wonders" co-taught by Peter Wagner and John Wimber (founder of the neopentecostal group of churches called The Vineyard). The practical side of the course caused a small uproar among evangelicals and fundamentalists who were uncomfortable with the teaching such as the one which states that it is always God's will to heal. The course was put on hold for a time but later, a revised course was again offered. Fuller professor Peter Wagner seems the key figure behind the growing charismatica on the Fuller Seminary campus.

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 Blauw, 1962, p. 120.
- 2 Newbigin, 1953, pp. 108-9.
- 3 McDonnell, 1987, p. 60.
- 4 Okeke, 1979, p. 11.
- 5 Bittlinger, 1986, p. 118.
- 6 *Revival Report*, C/90 E, p. 9.
- 7 Newbigin, 1984, p. 5.
- 8 An article in the *London Times* (24 February 1991, p.16) describing some of the disruptions which marred the WCC meeting in Canberra, Australia is a vivid example of the kind of press which reinforces the non-conciliar perception of the WCC as a group consumed by peripheral issues.
- 9 Isaacson, 1990, p. 130.
- 10 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 130-1.
- 11 Roberts, 1989, p. 43, reports that YWAM has not yet decided if the affiliation is worth the membership fee since EFMA fees are based on an organisation's size.
- 12 *Foundational Values of Youth With A Mission*, 1990, p. 2.
- 13 Cunningham, 1988, pp. 61-2; cf. also F. McClung, 1987.
- 14 See, for example, F. Wilson, 1990, p. 27ff.
- 15 Stoll, 1990, p. 94.
- 16 Stoll, 1990, p. 163.
- 17 A. Anderson, 1987, p. 74. Rhema USA statistic taken from Barrett in Burgess, 1988, p. 827. When asked about Rhema's inter-church relations, an American pentecostal friend and mission executive quipped, "Asking with whom Rhema associates is a bit like asking with whom the Southern Baptists associate; the better question is who associates with them?"
- 18 The information in this paragraph taken from a letter to the author dated 1 May 1991. Interestingly, Luke 4 is also the foundational text of Christian activism.
- 19 Bonnke, 1989, p. 104.
- 20 *Revival Report*, 4/88-E, p. 3 and 2/90/E, p. 12.
- 21 Obviously, there have been other, similarly large gatherings of neopentecostals around the world. Unfortunately, the details of such conferences are not consolidated into one publication. This lack of knowledge certainly impoverishes the Church.
- 22 It is widely recognised that music is a vital element of most church growth. See, for example, Synan's synopsis of the "Kansas City Conference" in Burgess, 1988, p. 515; see also Synan, 1986. Hollenweger, 1989, also discusses the important role of music in neo/pentecostalism.
- 23 H. Synan in Burgess, 1988, p. 221. Dispensationalist fundamentalist J. Vernon McGee is a particularly outspoken critic of the neo/pentecostal movement.
- 24 Robeck, Jr., 1987a, p. 115. Cf. also d'Epinay, 1969, chapter six.
- 25 Robeck, Jr. in Burgess, 1988, p. 635 and Robeck, Jr., 1987a, p. 125.

- 26 d'Epinay, 1969, p. 189; cf. also Robeck, Jr., 1987a, p. 120ff. Cf. also Hodges, 1977, chapter seven.
- 27 Robeck, Jr., 1987a, p. 118. For a summary of Gee's ecumenical efforts see D. Bundy in Burgess, 1988, pp. 330-1; for a summary of du Plessis' efforts see R. Spittler in Burgess, 1988, pp. 250-254.
- 28 As quoted in Quebedeaux, 1983, p. 208.
- 29 Fung, October/November 1987, pp. 1, 5.
- 30 "The Lausanne Covenant", 1974, paragraph four.
- 31 Cf. Ojo, 1986, p. 340ff.; Hagin, Jr., 1981, p. 7; and *The Word of Faith*, March 1991, p. 7. Bonnke, 1989, makes this point throughout his book.
- 32 Fung, July/August 1990 issue.
- 33 South Africa's Allan Boesak and Bishop Desmond Tutu are well known, notable exceptions.
- 34 Newbigin, 1982, p. 148.
- 35 McClung, Jr. and Moala, 1989, p. 20.
- 36 McClung, Jr., F. and Moala, 1989, p. 81.
- 37 G. McClung, Jr., 1990, p. 153.
- 38 G. Anderson, 1961, p. 5.
- 39 G. Anderson, 1961, p. 5.
- 40 In the promotional brochure for the 1989 "Take It By Force" conference we read: "God is calling the next generation to a new standard of ministry with a new zeal of aggressive evangelism to show this world Christianity, Jesus style!...God has raised up a generation that is calling out for integrity and zeal, raising up the banner of Christ to a lost world. We must seek God with a spirit of co-operation, not competition...there is going to be a great outpouring of God's Spirit that will break down denominational walls and old traditional barriers where the old is trying to resist the new".
- 41 Some of the more extreme fundamentalist churches are the exception.
- 42 Newbigin, 1984, p. 10.
- 43 F. Wilson, 1990, pp. 27, 29.
- 44 "The Lausanne Covenant", 1974, paragraph seven; cf. also *Lausanne Occasional Papers, No. 24: Co-operating in World Evangelisation* (Wheaton, Illinois, 1983).
- 45 But as Hollenweger, 1972, p. 505ff. points out "the purpose of the Pentecostal Movement was to reconcile the different Christian denominations". In this sense the movement has been a total failure.
- 46 Pomerville, 1985, p. 163.
- 47 Robeck, Jr., 1987a, pp. 119, 120.
- 48 Bittlinger, 1987, p. 57.
- 49 Cf. P. Hocken in Burgess, 1988, p. 139.
- 50 Dussell, 1988, p. 83.
- 51 In Fung, October/November 1987, p. 7.
- 52 See chapter six of Isaacson, 1990.
- 53 *The Word of Faith*, January 1991, pp. 10-11.
- 54 Muir, 1988, p. 13.
- 55 Stockwell, 1986, p. 114.

- 56 Stockwell, 1986, pp. 114-5.
- 57 Robeck, Jr., 1987a, p. 127.
- 58 Robeck, Jr., 1987b, pp. 185, 186.
- 59 Hollenweger, 1978, p. 34.
- 60 Lederle, 1988, p. 38.
- 61 Bittlinger, 1987, pp. 56-7.

CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 Ahlstrom, 1972, p. 1080.
- 2 Ahlstrom, 1972, p. 1082-3.
- 3 Ahlstrom, 1972, p. 1083; cf. also Ouebedeaux, 1983, pp. 215-6.
- 4 Berger, 1979, p. 28.
- 5 Cf. Harrell, p. 227ff.
- 6 B. Wilson, 1982, pp. 27, 31.
- 7 Hagin, Jr., 1981, pp. 6-7.
- 8 There are some appalling implications to this story. Hagin, Jr. apparently relates this account of the villager's successful crop as "proof" of the efficacy of the faith gospel. The summary implication is that the faith message is "The Truth" of the Word of God and that any other gospel is merely an ersatz. Equally unsavoury is the reaction of the villager to his new prosperity. We are left with the very distinct impression that the man's abundance, presented in stark contrast to the others' paucity, blessed no one but himself. At the very least, we expected to hear of how the man's ten percent tithe benefitted his local church.
- 9 Amadi, 1982, p. 23. Cf. also the conclusion in Hackett, 1990 and C. Baeta's "Conflict in Mission: Historical and Separatist Churches" in G. Anderson, 1961, p. 293ff.
- 10 Isaacson, 1990, pp. 111-2.
- 11 Hunter, 1982, p. 46.
- 12 Shenk, 1991, p. 7.
- 13 B. Wilson, 1982, p. 141.
- 14 Willems, 1967, p. 259.
- 15 Cf. Sepulveda, 1989, p. 86ff.
- 16 Daneel, 1987, p. 143.
- 17 Some African clergy in the traditional Protestant churches are likely to see the necessity of both.
- 18 For example, see Synan, 1986 and Burgess, 1988, pp. 193-4.
- 19 Cf. the neopentecostal worldview section, Chapter Three, p. 55ff.
- 20 The obvious allusion to the west's military might cannot be overlooked; in fact, Harrell, 1985, notes that many of the healing revivalists of the 1940s and 1950s were World War 2 veterans.
- 21 This is certain to be one more reason for the misunderstandings between WCC and neo/pentecostal Christians; the imagery of warfare is likely to vex Mennonites and other biblical pacifists.
- 22 Woodling, 1987, p. 38. Stoll, 1990, p. 67, offers the evangelical explanation for the continued high profile of North American missionaries: with 70% of the world's trained Christians, 80% of the Christian resources, and 90% of all money spent on world evangelisation coming from North America, North American Christians, particularly those in the USA, feel that surely the continent must play a special role in God's plans; with so many of the resources, North America needs to bear an outsized share of the task.
- 23 In *The Gospel in the African City* (London, 1991), p. 142.

- 24 Brunner, 1931, p. 126.
- 25 Stark and Bainbridge, 1985, p. 435.
- 26 Williams, 1990, pp. 252-3.
- 27 Hollenweger, 1991, p. 99.
- 28 Cf. Hollenweger, 1980, pp. 68,73.
- 29 Harrell, Jr., 1985, p. 1 52ff.
- 30 This happened to the congregation in which I assisted in Rusape, Zimbabwe in 1983-1984.
- 31 Cf. Isaacson, 1990, pp. 110-1; cf. also Ojo, 1988b, pp. 148-9.

CHAPTER EIGHT

- 1 See Chapter Three; cf. also M. Marty in G. Anderson, 1975. p. 80ff.
- 2 "Target 2000: All Nations All Peoples", 1988, p. 3.
- 3 Cf. *Revival Report*, F/9OE, p. 4.
- 4 Cf. Isaacson, pp. 113-4.
- 5 Cf. Appendix 8; also *Revival Report* 1/89E, p. 9 and *Revival Report* A/91 E, p. 5.
- 6 Kumuyi in Isaacson, 1990, p. 10; cf. also footnote 29. As well, even Hagin alludes to such use in *The Word of Faith*, March 1991, p. 6, where he states: "Preach the Word and you will see God move, for He will confirm the Word with signs and wonders".
- 7 Cf. Synan, 1987, p. 34.
- 8 Cf. C. Wagner in Burgess, p. 194.
- 9 There are regular offers in *The Word of Faith*, *Revival Report*, and through Maanafest Books, a YWAM publishing facility in Britain; also cf. Appendix 10 .
- 10 That these channels of communication are of a predominantly non-literary nature further contributes to neopentecostalism's chances of success in a world increasingly characterised by its oral and visual modes of communication.
- 11 *Deeper Life*, July 1990, p. 6.
- 12 *The Word of Faith*, May 1990, p. 22.
- 13 *Revival Report*, 2/9OE, p. 11.
- 14 *The Word of Faith*, July 1989, p. 22.
- 15 *Deeper Life*, May 1990, p.6. See also Appendix 7.
- 16 *The Word of Faith*, December 1990, p. 22.
- 17 *The Word of Faith*, September 1 989, p. 22. Testimonies are regularly reported in the *The Word of Faith's* "Letters From You" section and in the *Deeper Life's* "Miracle" section.
- 18 Cf. C. Wagner in Burgess, p. 194.
- 19 Isaacson, 1990, p. 164.
- 20 Gaxiola, 1977, p. 61. From the perspective of a neopentecostal church, there are certain advantages to this dynamic of ecclesiastical self-reliance. Stoll, 1990, p. 102, notes that those rural pentecostal churches which avoided links with urban ecclesiastical bureaucracies were less likely to be controlled by them. Further, in maintaining its autonomy, a church is less prone to be overrun by unwanted foreign missionaries.
- 21 Both in Isaacson, 1990, pp. 164, 165.
- 22 Newbigin, 1978, p. 19. Cf. also Newbigin, 1986, p. 124 where he does make reference to believers' privileges.
- 23 Hagin, 1 982a, pp. 1-2, 7, 13, 23, 25, 28-9.
- 24 Hagin, 1986a, pp. 28-9, 30.
- 25 *The Word of Faith*, March 1991, p. 6.
- 26 The ten monthly *The Word of Faith* issues are July -September 1989, May 1990, November- December 1990, and January-April 1991. Three of the four articles were

written by Hagin Jr.: "The All-Sufficiency of Christ" (September 1989), "Dare to Dream" (May 1990), and "Don't Quit in the Midst of Turmoil" (April 1991); the other was written by Hagin Sr.: "Boldness!" (March 1991).

- 27 *The Word of Faith*, April 1991, pp. 5, 6.
- 28 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 20, 21.
- 29 Bonnke, 1989, pp. 138-9.
- 30 Bonnke, 1989, p. 64.
- 31 Bonnke, 1989, p. 170.
- 32 Kumuyi, 1985b, p. 50.
- 33 *Deeper Life*, May 1990, p. 5.
- 34 McClung, Jr., 1988a, pp. 8, 61.
- 35 McClung, Jr., 1988b, p. 7.
- 36 McClung, Jr., 1990b, p. 148.
- 37 McClung, Jr., 1988a, pp. 17-18.
- 38 See Chapter Four.
- 39 Castro, Bosch, G. McClung, 1990, p. 146.
- 40 Cf., for example, "The Lausanne Covenant" and Newbigin, 1978.
- 41 Cf., for example, Matthew 6-8.
- 42 Newbigin, 1984, p. 4.
- 43 Robeck, Jr., 1987b, p. 187.
- 44 Cf. for example, John 17.

CHAPTER NINE

- 1 The Deuteronomy citation is more characteristic of Hagin and Kumuyi than Bonnke and Cunningham, the Luke citation characteristic of Hagin, Kumuyi, and Bonnke, and the 1 Corinthians citation characteristic of all four. Cf. Chapter Two, p. 25ff., p. 33ff., p. 49ff and Chapter Three, p. 55.
- 2 Chapter Four, p. 99.
- 3 Cf. the sheep-stealing accusations leveled against Deeper Life, Chapter Two, p. 38.
- 4 Cf. Stott's remarks in Chapter Three, p. 71.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Pentecostal Adherents in Various Countries, 1957.

PENTECOSTAL STATISTICS

As a result of international and world conferences held in the last decade, the curiosity of many had been stirred as to the scope and size of the Pentecostal revival. We began to collect information and statistics and finally, in 1956, published a list of statistics from information which in some cases was almost ten years old. This first list showed that there must be over five million Pentecostal adherents throughout the world. However, many countries are not listed and the figures given for some were completely outdated. During the last twelve months we have obtained more up-to-date statistics and from almost every part of the world. It is now clear that the Pentecostal community in the world must be over eight million and possibly nearer ten million.

We must point out that Pentecostal churches usually record only the names of their adult members who have actually joined the society. They do not give the number of children or the number of regular attendants at their services who might be considered adherents to the Pentecostal faith. Therefore, these figures may yet be far from the actual facts. We also know that there are thousands of independent churches and many indigenous movements from whom we have not yet received a report at all. We are sure the above totals are not exaggerated, and here are the figures as we have them at the time of this publication.

PENTECOSTAL ADHERENTS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

EUROPE		ASIA AND FAR EAST		LATIN AMERICA		AFRICA	
Austria	2,000	Arabia	500	Argentina	50,000	Algiers	1,000
Belgium	3,500	Burma	10,000	Bahamas	12,000	Angola	5,500
Bulgaria	7,000	Ceylon	2,000	Barbados	8,800	Basutoland	1,500
Cyprus	240	China	100,000	Bermuda	350	Belgian Congo	100,000
Czechoslovakia	1,200	Fiji Islands	300	Bolivia	2,000	Egypt	10,000
Denmark	8,000	Formosa	1,000	Brazil	600,000	French West Africa	5,000
Finland	30,000	India	100,000	British Guiana	1,000	French Sudan	1,000
France	30,000	Indonesia	500,000	British Honduras	1,000	Gold Coast, Ghana	55,000
Germany	60,000	Iran	1,500	Chile	300,000	Kenya Colony	36,000
Great Britain	60,000	Israel	200	Colombia	5,000	Liberia	11,000
Greece	1,000	Japan	2,000	Costa Rica	1,000	Mozambique	3,000
Hungary	5,000	Jordan	200	Cuba	15,000	Nigeria	200,000
Iceland	1,000	Korea	2,000	Dominican Republic	5,000	Northern Rhodesia	3,000
Ireland	3,500	Lebanon	100	El Salvador	10,000	Nyasaland	5,000
Italy	100,000	Malaya	1,000	Guatemala	19,500	Sierra Leone	10,000
Netherlands	2,000	Nepal	100	Haiti	35,000	South Africa	200,000
Norway	35,000	Dutch Guinea	500	Honduras	2,000	Southern Rhodesia	10,000
Poland	20,000	Pakistan	2,000	Jamaica	40,000	Tanganyika	30,000
Portugal	2,000	Philippines	20,000	Mexico	100,000	Togo-Dahomey	1,500
Rumania	50,000	Samoa	300	Nicaragua	4,000	Tunisia	100
Spain	300	Syria	1,000	Panama	25,000		
Sweden	120,000	Thailand	1,200	Paraguay	1,000		
Switzerland	5,000	*****		Peru	7,000		
Yugoslavia	3,820	Iron Curtain Countries and		Puerto Rico	35,000		
*****		U.S.S.R.	600,000	Trinidad	15,000		
Australia	10,000	*****		Uruguay	1,500		
Canada	100,000	U.S.A.	4,000,000	Venezuela	5,000		
New Zealand	7,500			Virgin Islands	300		

GRAND TOTAL

December 1956	5,500,000
December 1957	8,004,010

DAVID J. DU PLESSIS

SOURCE: DU PLESSIS, 1958, PP. 200-01.

Appendix 2. Status of Global Mission, 1990.

STATUS OF GLOBAL MISSION, 1990, IN CONTEXT OF 20TH CENTURY

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH, JANUARY 1990

Year:	1900	1970	1980	1990	2000
WORLD POPULATION					
1. Total population	1,619,886,800	3,610,034,400	4,373,917,500	5,297,042,000	6,259,642,000
2. Urban dwellers	232,694,900	1,354,237,000	1,797,479,000	2,414,450,100	3,160,381,900
3. Rural dwellers	1,387,191,900	2,255,797,400	2,576,438,500	2,882,591,900	3,099,260,100
4. Adult population	1,025,938,000	2,245,227,300	2,698,396,900	3,244,068,700	3,808,564,300
5. Literates	286,705,000	1,437,761,900	1,774,002,700	2,208,993,000	2,697,595,100
6. Nonliterates	739,233,000	807,465,400	924,394,200	1,035,075,700	1,110,969,200
WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF CITIES					
7. Metropolises (over 100,000 population)	400	2,400	2,700	3,450	4,200
8. Megacities (over 1 million population)	20	161	227	330	433
WORLD POPULATION BY RELIGION					
9. Christians (total all kinds)	558,056,300	1,216,579,400	1,432,686,500	1,758,777,900	2,130,000,000
10. Muslims	200,102,200	550,919,000	722,956,500	934,842,200	1,200,653,000
11. Nonreligious	2,923,300	543,065,300	715,901,400	866,427,700	1,021,888,400
12. Hindus	203,033,300	465,784,800	582,749,900	705,345,900	859,252,300
13. Buddhists	127,159,000	231,672,200	273,715,600	323,349,500	359,092,100
14. Atheists	225,600	165,288,500	195,119,400	233,099,500	262,447,600
15. New-Religionists	5,910,000	76,443,100	96,021,800	117,589,100	138,263,800
16. Tribal religionists	106,339,600	88,077,400	89,963,500	99,424,000	100,535,900
17. Sikhs	2,960,600	10,612,200	14,244,400	18,152,800	23,831,700
18. Jews	12,269,800	15,185,900	16,938,200	17,719,800	19,173,600
19. Other religionists	400,907,100	246,406,600	233,620,300	221,314,200	143,503,600
GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY					
20. Total Christians as % of world	34.4	33.7	32.8	33.2	34.0
21. Affiliated church members	521,563,200	1,131,809,600	1,323,389,700	1,623,833,000	1,967,000,000
22. Practising Christians	469,259,800	884,021,800	1,018,355,300	1,209,794,000	1,377,000,000
23. Pentecostals/Charismatics	3,700,000	72,600,000	158,000,000	372,651,300	562,526,000
24. Crypto-Christians	3,572,400	55,699,700	70,395,000	134,784,700	176,208,000
25. Average Christian martyrs per year	35,600	230,000	270,000	260,000	500,000
MEMBERSHIP BY ECCLESIASTICAL BLOC					
26. Anglicans	30,573,700	47,557,000	49,804,000	53,820,200	61,037,200
27. Catholics (non-Roman)	276,000	3,134,400	3,439,400	3,822,800	4,334,100
28. Marginal Protestants	927,600	10,830,200	14,077,500	18,275,200	24,106,200
29. Nonwhite indigenous-Christians	7,743,100	58,702,000	82,181,100	143,823,600	204,100,000
30. Orthodox	115,897,700	143,402,500	160,737,900	179,517,100	199,819,000
31. Protestants	103,056,700	233,424,200	262,157,600	324,240,100	386,000,000
32. Roman Catholics	266,419,400	672,319,100	802,660,000	962,632,600	1,144,000,000
MEMBERSHIP BY CONTINENT					
33. Africa	8,756,400	115,924,200	164,571,000	231,053,500	323,914,900
34. East Asia	1,763,000	10,050,200	16,149,600	84,455,900	128,000,000
35. Europe	273,788,400	397,108,700	403,177,600	408,392,800	411,448,700
36. Latin America	60,025,100	262,027,800	340,978,600	437,449,600	555,486,000
37. Northern America	59,569,700	169,246,900	178,892,500	189,460,500	201,265,200
38. Oceania	4,311,400	14,669,400	16,160,600	18,183,800	21,361,500
39. South Asia	16,347,200	76,770,200	106,733,200	143,176,000	185,476,700
40. USSR	97,002,000	86,012,300	96,726,500	107,614,800	118,101,000
CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS					
41. Service agencies	1,500	14,100	17,500	21,000	24,000
42. Foreign-mission sending agencies	600	2,200	3,100	3,970	4,800
43. Institutions	9,500	80,500	91,000	99,200	103,000
CHRISTIAN WORKERS					
44. Nationals (all denominations)	1,050,000	2,350,000	2,950,000	3,923,000	4,500,000
45. Pentecostal/Charismatic national workers	2,000	237,300	420,000	934,500	1,133,000
46. Aliens (foreign missionaries)	62,000	240,000	249,000	285,250	400,000
47. Pentecostal/Charismatic foreign missionaries	100	3,790	34,600	85,500	167,000
CHRISTIAN FINANCE (in U.S. \$, per year)					
48. Personal income of church members	270 billion	4,100 billion	5,878 billion	8,950 billion	12,700 billion
49. Personal income of Pentecostals/Charismatics	250,000,000	157 billion	395 billion	1,005 billion	1,550 billion
50. Giving to Christian causes	8 billion	70 billion	100.3 billion	157 billion	220 billion
51. Churches' income	7 billion	50 billion	64.5 billion	83.4 billion	100 billion
52. Parachurch and institutional income	1 billion	20 billion	35.8 billion	74.2 billion	120 billion
53. Ecclesiastical crime	300,000	5,000,000	30,000,000	874,500,000	2 billion
54. Income of global foreign missions	200,000,000	3.0 billion	5.0 billion	8.6 billion	12 billion
55. Computers in Christian use (total numbers)	0	1,000	3,000,000	54,000,000	340,000,000
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE					
56. New commercial book titles per year	2,200	17,100	18,800	22,400	25,000
57. New titles including devotional	3,100	52,000	60,000	65,600	75,000
58. Christian periodicals	3,500	23,000	22,500	23,800	35,000
59. New books/articles on evangelization per year	300	3,100	7,500	11,000	16,000
SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION (all sources)					
60. Bibles per year	5,452,600	25,000,000	36,800,000	51,410,000	70,000,000
61. New Testaments per year	7,300,000	45,000,000	57,500,000	76,865,000	110,000,000
CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING					
62. Christian radio/TV stations	0	1,230	1,450	2,160	4,000
63. Total monthly listeners/viewers	0	750,000,000	990,474,400	1,369,620,600	2,150,000,000
64. for Christian stations	0	150,000,000	291,810,500	451,859,400	600,000,000
65. for secular stations	0	650,000,000	834,068,900	1,155,597,300	1,810,000,000
CHRISTIAN URBAN MISSION					
66. Non-Christian megacities	5	65	95	150	202
67. New non-Christian urban dwellers per day	5,200	51,100	69,300	98,750	140,000
68. Urban Christians	159,600,000	660,800,000	844,600,000	1,094,713,000	1,393,700,000
69. Urban Christians as % of urban dwellers	68.8	47.8	46.3	45.0	44.5
70. Evangelized urban dwellers, %	72.0	80.0	83.0	88.0	91.0
WORLD EVANGELIZATION					
71. Unevangelized populations	788,159,000	1,391,956,000	1,380,576,000	1,252,557,000	1,038,819,000
72. Unevangelized as % of world	48.7	38.6	31.6	23.6	16.6
73. Unreached peoples (with no churches)	3,500	1,300	700	450	200
74. World evangelization plans since AD 30	250	510	620	910	1,400

Appendix 3a. Rhema Statistics.

	<u>1966</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1992</u>
RADIO MINISTRIES/ NUMBER OF STATIONS				
"Faith Seminar of the Air" (1966)	1	53	158	229
			<u>1988</u>	<u>1992</u>
"Rhema Radio Church" (1988)			11	77

RHEMA BIBLE TRAINING CENTERS/ NUMBER OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS	<u>1975</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1992</u>
Tulsa, Oklahoma (1975)	58	1604	1781
South Africa (1980)	—	338	504
Australia (1981)	—	136	86

RHEMA BIBLE CHURCH/ MEMBERSHIP	<u>1985</u>	<u>1992</u>
Tulsa, Oklahoma (1985)	**1200	4731
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1992</u>
South Africa (1979)	13	16.000
Australia (1979)	14	2150

**There was no actual count during services held October-December 1985; the first membership class numbered 1200 (charter members).

Source: Letter from Kenneth E. Hagin, Jr. , 11 February 1992.

Appendix 3b. Deeper Life Statistics.

1. LAGOS GROWTH

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>GROUP TYPE</u>	<u>EST. NO. PARTICIPANTS</u>
1973	Bible Study	15
1975	Bible Study	500
1978	Retreat (Ilorin)	10.000
1981	Retreat (Lagos)	45.000
1982	Church Services begin	
1988	Sunday Services	50.000
	Monday Bible Study	24.000
	Thursday Miracle Hour	50.000
1991	Decentralised Church	**10.000 (original location) 70 branches
1992	Decentralised Church	***70.000 total membership

2. GROWTH BEYOND LAGOS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>MINISTRY/NUMBERS</u>
1988	All Nigeria	1000 congregations; 20.000 participants
1988	Africa	By this year, mission work established in Ghana, Zambia, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Swaziland, and Tanzania.
1988	Beyond Africa	By 1988 mission work started in Britain. **Since 1988 mission work started in USA, France, Italy and Netherlands.
1991	London	**Main congregation numbers 400; three other locations.
1991	Moscow	***Church planted; size unknown.

3. CONSTITUENCY

AFRICA: 99%+ black. **EUROPE/USA: est. 95% black, 5% non-black. Constituency crosses the socioeconomic barrier. As of 1988, average age of Lagos membership: 32.5 years.

Sources: Isaacson, 1990, pp. 18, 57, 92-122. **Phone conversation with Rev. Pre Ovia, minister of the main congregation in London, May 1991. ****World Christian News*, February 1992, p. 2.

Appendix 3c. Youth With A Mission Statistics.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FULL-TIME STAFF</u>	<u>NO. OF STUDENTS</u> (FIRST SCHOOL-1969)	<u>SHORT-TERM</u>
*1961	2	0	6
*1970	unknown	36	1200 (est.)
**1972	300 (est.)	unknown	2000 (est.)
**1974	unknown	500 (est.)	unknown

Sources: *Cunningham, 1984, pp. 38, 43, 97, 90, 95; **Letter from Paul Filidis, Director, Research and Information, 24 March 1992, who states that "no reliable data was kept pre 1980".

Appendix 3d. Christ for All Nations Statistics.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CRUSADE LOCATION</u>	<u>ESTIMATED TOTAL ATTENDANCE</u>	<u>BAPTISMS OR DECISION CARDS</u>
Ap 1975	Gaborone	10.000	500 bapt.
Jl 1978	Green Valley, R.S.A.	136.000	8000 d.c.
Oc 1984	Harare	300.000	31.000 d.c.
Ju 1988	Nairobi	1.200.000	17.400 bapt.
Oc 1990	Kaduna, Nigeria	1.670.000	200.000 d.c.
No 1990	Ilorin, Nigeria	730.000	120.000 d.c.
My 1991	Jakarta	450.000	65.000 d.c.
Ju 1991	Kinshasa	1.085.000	200.000 d.c.
Au 1991	Ostrava, Czechoslovakia	16.000	2.500 d.c.

**The annual average of decisions (to convert to Christianity) is one million; in 1991, two million were recorded. The average size of a crusade audience is 100.000; the largest has been 500.000. Audience composition reflects the nation sponsoring the crusade.

Sources: Steele, 1984, pp. 60-2, 119, 146; Steele, 1988, p. 54; *Revival Reports* 4/88E, 1/89E, F/90E, A/91E, C/91E; **phone conversation with Diane Olson, Christ for All Nations' USA Administrator, 7 February 1992.

Appendix 4. Rhema Bible Church, Statement of Faith.



Kenneth Hagin Ministries

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We Believe . . .

THE SCRIPTURES — The Bible is the inspired Word of God, the product of holy men of old who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The New Covenant, as recorded in the New Testament, we accept as our infallible guide in matters pertaining to conduct and doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

We Believe . . .

THE GODHEAD — Our God is one, but manifested in three persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, being co-equal (Phil. 2:6). God the Father is greater than all; the sender of the Word (Logos) and the Begetter (John 14:28; John 16:28; John 17:14). The Son is the Word flesh-covered, the One Begotten, and has existed with the Father from the beginning (John 1:1; John 1:18; John 1:14). The Holy Spirit proceeds forth from both the Father and the Son and is eternal (John 15:26).

We Believe . . .

MAN, HIS FALL AND REDEMPTION — Man is a created being, made in the likeness and image of God, but through Adam's transgression and fall, sin came into the world. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was manifested to undo the work of the devil and gave His life and shed His blood to redeem and restore man back to God (Rom. 5:14; Rom. 3:10; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 3:8).

Salvation is the gift of God to man, separate from works and the law, and is made operative by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, producing works acceptable to God (Eph. 2:8).

We Believe . . .

ETERNAL LIFE AND THE NEW BIRTH — Man's first step toward salvation is godly sorrow that worketh repentance. The New Birth is necessary to all men, and when experienced produces eternal life (2 Cor. 7:10; 1 John 5:12; John 3:3-5).

We Believe . . .

WATER BAPTISM — Baptism in water is by immersion, is a direct commandment of our Lord, and is for believers only. The ordinance is a symbol of the Christian's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39). The following recommendation regarding the water baptismal formula is adopted; to wit: "On the confession of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and by His authority, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

We Believe . . .

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY GHOST — The Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire is a gift from God as promised by the Lord Jesus Christ to all believers in this dispensation and is received subsequent to the New Birth. This experience is accompanied by the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Holy Spirit Himself gives utterance (Matt. 3:11; John 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:38,39; Acts 19:1-7; Acts 2:4).

We Believe . . .

SANCTIFICATION — The Bible teaches that without holiness no man can see the Lord. We believe in the Doctrine of Sanctification as a definite, yet progressive work of grace, commencing at the time of regeneration and continuing until the consummation of salvation at Christ's return (Heb. 12:14; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:12-14; 1 Cor. 1:30).

We Believe . . .

DIVINE HEALING — Healing is for the physical ills of the human body and is wrought by the power of God through the prayer of faith, and by the laying on of hands. It is provided for in the atonement of Christ, and is the privilege of every member of the Church today (Mark 16:18; James 5:14,15; 1 Peter 2:24; Matt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4,5).

We Believe . . .

RESURRECTION OF THE JUST AND THE RETURN OF OUR LORD — The angels said to Jesus' disciples, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." His coming is imminent. When He comes, "... the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. . . ." (Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16,17). Following the Tribulation, He shall return to earth as King of kings, and Lord of lords, and together with His saints, who shall be kings and priests, He shall reign a thousand years (Rev. 20:6).

We Believe . . .

HELL AND ETERNAL RETRIBUTION — The one who physically dies in his sins without accepting Christ is hopelessly and eternally lost in the Lake of Fire and, therefore, has no further opportunity of hearing the Gospel or repenting. The Lake of Fire is literal. The terms "eternal" and "everlasting," used in describing the duration of the punishment of the damned in the Lake of Fire, carry the same thought and meaning of endless existence as used in denoting the duration of joy and ecstasy of saints in the presence of God (Heb. 9:27; Rev. 19:20).

Appendix 5. Books by Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Hagin, Jr.

Enjoy these additional

BOOKS BY KENNETH E. HAGIN

*Redeemed From Poverty, Sickness and Death
 *What Faith Is
 *Seven Vital Steps To Receiving the Holy Spirit
 *Right and Wrong Thinking
 Prayer Secrets
 *Authority of the Believer (foreign only)
 *How To Turn Your Faith Loose
 The Key to Scriptural Healing
 Praying To Get Results
 The Present-Day Ministry of Jesus Christ
 The Gift of Prophecy
 Healing Belongs to Us
 The Real Faith
 *The Interceding Christian
 How You Can Know the Will of God
 Man on Three Dimensions
 The Human Spirit
 Turning Hopeless Situations Around
 Casting Your Cares Upon the Lord
 Seven Steps for Judging Prophecy
 The Origin and Operation of Demons
 Demons and How To Deal With Them
 Ministering to the Oppressed
 Bible Answers to Man's Questions on Demons
 Faith Food for Autumn
 Faith Food for Winter
 Faith Food for Spring
 Faith Food for Summer
 *The New Birth
 *Why Tongues?
 *In Him
 *God's Medicine
 *You Can Have What You Say
 How To Write Your Own Ticket With God
 *Don't Blame God
 *Words
 Plead Your Case
 *How To Keep Your Healing
 Laying on of Hands
 A Better Covenant
 Having Faith in Your Faith
 Five Hindrances to Growth in Grace
 Why Do People Fall Under the Power?
 The Bible Way To Receive the Holy Spirit
 Godliness Is Profitable
 I Went to Hell
 Three Big Words
 Obedience in Finances
 His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful
 Paul's Revelation: The Gospel of Reconciliation
 How To Walk in Love
 The Precious Blood of Jesus
 Love Never Fails
 How God Taught Me About Prosperity
 Learning To Forget
 The Coming Restoration

The Gifts and Calling of God
 Signs of the Times
 Learning To Flow With the Spirit of God
 The Glory of God
 Hear and Be Healed
 New Thresholds of Faith
 *Prevailing Prayer to Peace
 Concerning Spiritual Gifts
 Bible Faith Study Course
 Bible Prayer Study Course
 The Holy Spirit and His Gifts
 *The Ministry Gifts (Study Guide)
 Seven Things You Should Know About Divine Healing
 El Shaddai
 Zoe: The God-Kind of Life
 A Commonsense Guide to Fasting
 Must Christians Suffer?
 The Woman Question
 The Believer's Authority
 Ministering to Your Family
 How You Can Be Led by the Spirit of God
 What To Do When Faith Seems Weak and Victory Lost
 The Name of Jesus
 The Art of Intercession
 Growing Up, Spiritually
 Bodily Healing and the Atonement
 Exceedingly Growing Faith
 Understanding the Anointing
 I Believe in Visions
 Understanding How To Fight the Good Fight of Faith
 The Art of Intercession
 Plans, Purposes, and Pursuits

BOOKS BY KENNETH HAGIN JR.

*Man's Impossibility — God's Possibility
 Because of Jesus
 The Key to the Supernatural
 *Faith Worketh by Love
 Blueprint for Building Strong Faith
 *Seven Hindrances to Healing
 *The Past Tense of God's Word
 Healing: A Forever-Settled Subject
 How To Make the Dream God Gave You Come True
 Faith Takes Back What the Devil's Stolen
 "The Prison Door Is Open —
 What Are You Still Doing Inside?"
 Itching Ears
 Where Do We Go From Here?
 How To Be a Success in Life
 Get Acquainted With God
 Showdown With the Devil
 Unforgiveness
 The Answer for Oppression
 Is Your Miracle Passing You By?
 Commanding Power
 The Life of Obedience
 Ministering to the Brokenhearted



*These titles are also available in Spanish. Information about other foreign translations of several of the above titles (i.e., Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Indonesian, Polish, Russian, Swahili, and Swedish) may be obtained by writing to the address listed below.

For a complete listing of books and cassette teaching tapes available, please write for our illustrated Faith Library Brochure.

SOURCE

→ Kenneth Hagin Ministries • P.O. Box 50126 • Tulsa, Oklahoma 74150-0126

Appendix 6. Rhema Bible Church, "Healing for the Whole Body" Chart.

SOURCE : RHEMA BIBLE TRAINING CENTER, TULSA, OK, USA

PROV. 4:20

HEALING FOR THE WHOLE MAN

MK 9:23

TEXTS: I THES 5:23, PS. 139:14-16
I COR. 6:13, 15, 19, 20
RM 12:1

EYES: DT. 34:7, PROV 20:12
LEV 26:16 (GAL 3:13)
DT. 28:32, 65 PS 146:8
IS. 29:18, 32:3, 35:5,
MT. 13:16

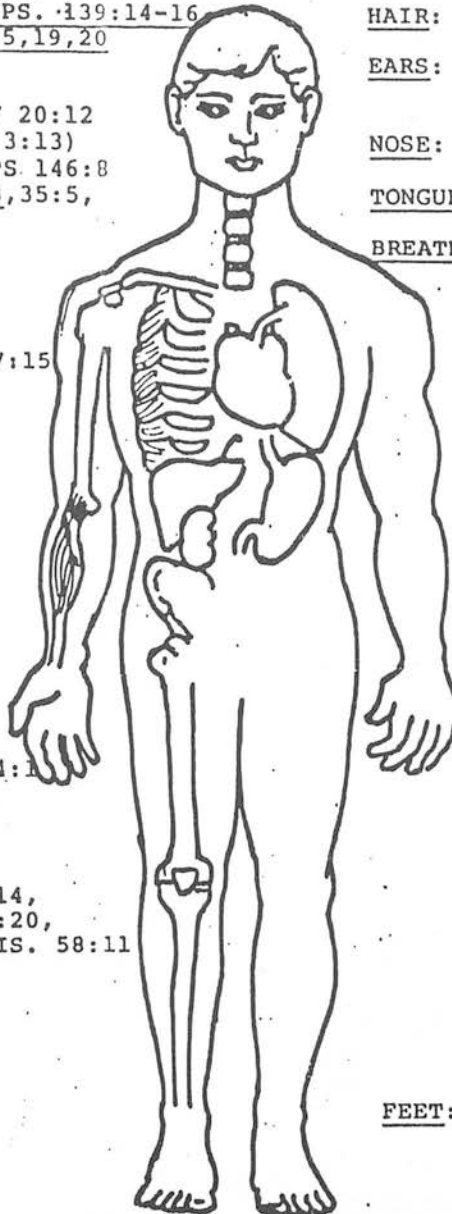
NECK: CAN. 4:4, 7:4
IS. 10:27

ARM: PS 18:34, HOS 7:15

BELLY: PROV 18:20,
CAN. 7:2

HANDS: DT. 33:7,
PS. 18:34, 144:1
NEH. 6:9

BONES: PS. 6:2, 92:14,
PROV 3:8, 15:20,
PROV 16:24, IS. 58:11
DT. 34:7
PS. 34:19-20



HAIR: MT. 10:30, ACTS 27:34, IS 46:

EARS: PROV 20:12, IS. 29:18, 32:3,
IS. 35:5, 42:18, 50:4, 5

NOSE: CAN. 7:4, 7:8

TONGUE: IS. 32:4, 35:6, 50:4

BREATH: IS. 42:5, EZK. 37:5, AC. 17:

SKIN: DT. 28:27, 35 (GAL 3:13)

FLESH: JOB 33:25, PROV 4:22,
EZK. 36:6, 8 DAN. 1:15,
RM. 8:11, II COR. 4:11

HEART: PS. 73:26
DT. 28:65/GAL. 3:13

BLOOD: JOEL 3:21, EZ. 16:6
MK. 5:29

HIP: CAN. 5:15/7:1

LEG: DT. 28:35, CAN. 5:15,
PROV 26:7 (KNEES),
IS. 35:3, 6 HB. 12:13
CAN. 7:1

KNEES: JOB 4:4, HEB. 12:12-13
CAN. 5:15/7:1

FEET: DT. 28:35, 36 (GAL 3:13),
I SAM 2:9, PS. 22:16 (EX 21:2,
PROV. 3:26, HAB. 3:19,
ACTS 3:7

HEALING FOR THE WHOLE MAN

I. SURFACE

II. FRAME

III. ORGANS

MATH. 8:17

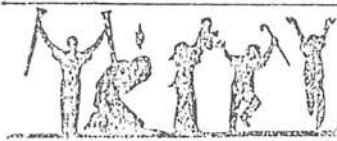
ISA. 53:4-5

I PET. 2:24

APPENDIX 7: DEEPER LIFE CHURCH NEWSLETTER, MIRACLE COLUMN

SOURCE:

DEEPLIFE, VOL. 2, NO. 6 JANUARY 1991



MIRACLES

SALVATION

My name is Emmanuel Adedoyin Badejo, living at 23 Agbalaya Street Street, Orlé Oshodi. I am a soldier by profession. I was fearful, shy and timid. I used to drink alcohol, attend films, smoke, visit harlots and squander my life away in sinfulness. All these led to my dropping out of Military School. I became confused and wayward. I was completely discouraged, wanting to commit suicide in 1981.

On a Sunday morning in 1986 at Nigerian Army School of Military Engineering Makurdi, the Spirit of the Lord cast my mind back to my past life, viewing the future, I perceived hell and lack of hope. Someone took me to Deeper Life Bible Church Makurdi in my distress. I heard the wordings of the song: 'What a friend we have in Jesus.' I broke down in tears, confessed my sins and surrendered my life to the Lord Jesus. I am now a child of God. Praise the Lord!

6-YEAR CHILDLESSNESS COME

I am Linda Ohikhena from 68 Olowora road, Isheri, Ikeja. I married in 1983 and till May 1988, I never had any baby. I became adulterous as a result of my childlessness. I had been to so many herbalists to no avail.

I was invited to the Deeper Life Bible Church in November 1987, but I was not saved until November 1988. However, the Lord manifested His power in my life in May/June when I became pregnant. I was delivered of my baby on the 2nd of February 1989.

Praise the Lord!



KILLER FEVER DEPARTS

My name is Samuel Adelabu Ayegbusi. I reside at Imagbon street, Fadeyi, Lagos. I came back from my

working place one day only to find myself weak, tired and unable to lift my hands, legs and body in general. The sickness tied me down for the following two days; unable to go to work. It was later discovered to be a terrible fever. I used to have the feeling of carrying a heavy load on my head. The head was so heavy that I had to be helped into a vehicle to the following Thursday Miracle Revival Service. I supported my head with my hand all through the service.

By the time the Pastor was ministering, he mentioned my problem. He went further to say that, that evil spirit had departed from my head. I shook my head right and left. The high temperature of the head came down immediately and I felt alright. Our God is indeed a God of miracle. Praise the Lord!



BACKSLIDER RESTORED AND RESITUATED

I'm Ibideun Elogun, from 34 Kulobi St. Oyingbo. I was an Alhaja before I knew the Lord on 28/10/78. I backslid due to family persecution. I became a smoker, drunkard, gambler, beer distributor and an adulterer.

The Lord brought me back to Himself through a friend in 1987, at the Deeper Life Bible Church. I heard about restitution and I obeyed I have also given up bear for frozen chicken and egg distribution. I was equally not with my first husband. I prayed and now I have rightly done the restitution in that area too.

Praise the Lord!



BOUNCING BABY BOY AT LAST

I am Bolanle Matthew, living at Boriga, Lagos. I have got six daughters before now. I had been looking up to the Almighty God for a boy. I had tried all in my power thinking that doctors could make this realizable. There was no help from them.

I came here, believing that God is the only One that could do the impossible in my life. On that glorious Thursday, the Pastor mentioned it in time of prayer that there was a woman in the congregation crying because she wanted a baby boy. I did not raise up my hand. The man of God went further to say that he had not seen the hand. I reluctantly raised up my hand and he said, he had now seen it. The Pastor then prayed.

Immediately, I started buying baby things for a male child in particular. Eventually, I conceived and got this bouncing baby boy.

Praise the Lord!



PREMATURE BIRTHS STOPPED

Chinyere Ogbonna is my name. I'm from House 10, G Close, 7th Avenue, Festac Town. I had visited many hospitals and herbal homes because of heat in the head, paralysed limbs, constant weakness of the body and complications during deliveries. I had spent much money and time but nothing bettered.

On the 24th of June 1986, I heard the word of God from a sister, who told me to make up my mind for

Christ. I surrendered to the Lord and became born again. In March 1989, I conceived after three premature deliveries. The devil threatened again but 'I am covered by the blood of Jesus.' I delivered safely in December. Okechukwu is the name of the boy.

Praise the Lord!

ADULTERER SAVED

My name is Joseph Ogbodu from Ijesha-Iedo Zone, Lagos. I was an habitual drunkard, smoker and adulterer of the highest order. I went out lying to women that I had not married. I kept my wife at my village to have a 'good time' for myself here in Lagos.

On the 29th of July 1987, a brother from this church preached to me about Hell! I was dumb-founded, not knowing whether it was real or not. I was restless right from that time. He urged me to accompany him to his Church. The devil was telling me to go back to my drinking parlour. Thank God His Spirit prevailed.

When I got to the Bible Study, I had a salvation message for the first



time in my life. I confessed my sins. Joy and happiness flowed into my life. My boss knew this in the office. Later I got sanctified. Moreover, the stomach trouble I had before vanished.

Praise the Lord!

ASTHMA REMOVED

Olaire Obarita testifies: 'I was a church goer but also a drunkard and adulterer before I had a message titled 'Jesus, The Man'. He said he was a confused man until 'I confessed my sins and became a child of God.' Besides this sin problem, Olaire had borne the yoke of asthma for several years. He recalls: 'I had asthma for years. I visited many hospitals without any solution. I was living on prescribed drugs which told very heavily on my purse until a Monday in July, 1989, when I had the opportunity of seeing the Pastor. He prayed for me and all the symptoms of asthma vanished. I now make a feast of all those menu I had abstained from for years. I am as fit as a fiddle presently. Praise the Lord for saving and healing me.'

Manila Covenant

WE AFFIRM that our calling as a missionary fellowship is to help complete the Great Commission. We celebrate the calling of the Lord Jesus upon our mission to be involved in evangelism, training, and ministries of mercy. We renew our commitment to the Lord and to one another so that by God's grace and the empowering of the Holy Spirit we will do all God asks of us to help complete the Great Commission.

WE AFFIRM the calling of the Lord upon our mission to mobilize youth for world evangelism. We express in this covenant our commitment to see young people mobilized in great numbers for world evangelism, and youthful, exuberant world changers be given every opportunity to take roles of leadership and influence in our mission.

WE AFFIRM God's calling upon our mission to focus on reaching those who have not been reached with the Gospel. We declare our desire to see tens of thousands of workers mobilized on the following new frontiers of world evangelism: the Muslim world, the Buddhist world, the Communist world, the Hindu world, the Small Island, Nomadic Christians, the Cities, the Poor and Needy, and Tribal Peoples.

WE AFFIRM the Lordship of Christ over every sphere of life. We commit ourselves to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that His Lordship is proclaimed over individual lives, nations, the family and home, the church in all its expressions, education, the electronic and printed media, arts and entertainment, the sports world, commerce, science & technology, government and politics. We believe that this should be done in the same spirit in which Jesus came: as a humble servant, laying down His rights and so pleasing His Father.

WE AFFIRM that God wants Youth With A Mission to be representative of all nations of the earth, and that our staff and leadership should be comprised of faces from Africa, Asia, Australasia, Latin America, Oceania, the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

WE AFFIRM our calling as a mission to love people in both word and deed in order to proclaim and demonstrate the Good News of the Gospel. Personal evangelism and practical concern alike give witness to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we will, by God's grace and mercy, proclaim the Good News and perform acts of mercy so that men and women will embrace the truth of the Gospel.

WE AFFIRM the importance of doing God's work, God's way. We declare our total dependence on God for wisdom, and ask Him to reveal to us any trace of paternalism, prejudice, or triumphalism. We choose to follow the example of the Lord Jesus who gave up His rights, defending the rights of the poor, and serving those He came to minister to in righteous humility.

WE AFFIRM that God wants both young and old, male and female, in positions of leadership and responsibility in our mission.

WE AFFIRM servant leadership and the importance of being accountable and submissive in our leadership styles and attitudes. We confirm the importance of all new staff going through a period of culturally appropriate training and orientation to help prepare them for service in God's Kingdom. We express our desire for God to continually revive and invigorate our discipleship training programs to make them a source of encouragement, equipping, and empowering for Christian service.

WE AFFIRM the importance of a spirit of humility, brokenness, and godly transparency in our relationships with one another. We commit ourselves afresh to the principles of unity as described by the apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter four and five. We accept the responsibility to deal with any character weakness or cultural barrier in a manner that would be pleasing to the Lord Jesus and that would promote unity within our mission and with the whole Body of Christ.

WE AFFIRM the importance of living a biblical and balanced life. We believe that we need Christians of all theological persuasions and backgrounds in the Body of Christ. We need their godly counsel, wisdom, teaching, and help to be all that God has intended us to be.

WE AFFIRM the importance of the local church. We humbly ask God for His grace and help to enable us to multiply and build up local churches and to work as partners with them for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Appendix 8.

Youth With A Mission, The Manila Covenant.

WE AFFIRM the ministry of prayer and intercession. We declare our total and utter dependence upon God and ask Him to continually revive our hearts so that we will always be a mission that intercedes for the nations and seeks God for His direction and guidance. We believe God has called our mission to build everything it does on the foundation of prayer, knowing that apart from God's leading, our best efforts will be dead works. We further declare our need for others to pray for us.

WE AFFIRM the importance of accountability between Youth With A Mission as a whole and its various bases, ministries, teams and schools. We confirm our need to be in submission to those we serve, those who are over us in the Lord, and those we work with as co-laborers. We believe that this spirit of accountability welcomes correction, encouragement, and openness in our corporate and personal lives.

WE AFFIRM the value of the individual. We commit ourselves to pursue the equipping, upbuilding, and empowering of all those God sends to us for the fulfillment of His ministry and purpose in their lives.

WE AFFIRM the ministry of hospitality, and commit ourselves to open our bases, homes, and hearts to all those God sends to us. We recognize this to be a biblical responsibility and we joyfully embrace the privilege of serving and honoring guests, teachers, fellow YWAMers, and the poor and the needy through this ministry.

WE AFFIRM the importance of financial accountability. We declare that we as Youth With A Mission will live by the highest legal, spiritual, and ethical standards in our handling of finances.

WE AFFIRM that Youth With A Mission is an international movement of Christians from many denominations dedicated to presenting Jesus Christ personally to this generation, to mobilizing as many as possible to help in this task, and to the training and equipping of believers for their part in fulfilling the Great Commission. As citizens of God's Kingdom, we are called to love, worship and obey our Lord, to love and serve His body, the Church, and to present the whole Gospel for the whole person throughout the world.

WE AFFIRM that the Bible is God's inspired and authoritative word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God's Son. We believe that man is created in God's image and that He created us to have eternal life through Christ. Although all men have sinned and come short of God's glory and are eternally lost without Christ, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that repentance, faith, love and obedience are necessary and fitting responses to God's initiative of grace towards us and that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. We believe that the Holy Spirit's power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ's last commandment: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

WE AFFIRM the Christian Magna Carta which believes the following basic rights are implicit in the Gospel. Everyone on earth has the right to:

1. Hear and understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Have a Bible available in their own language.
3. Have a Christian fellowship available nearby, to be able to meet for fellowship regularly each week, and to have biblical teaching and worship with others in the Body of Christ.
4. Have a Christian education available for their children.
5. Have the basic necessities of life: food, water, clothing, shelter and health care.
6. Lead a productive life of fulfillment spiritually, mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically.

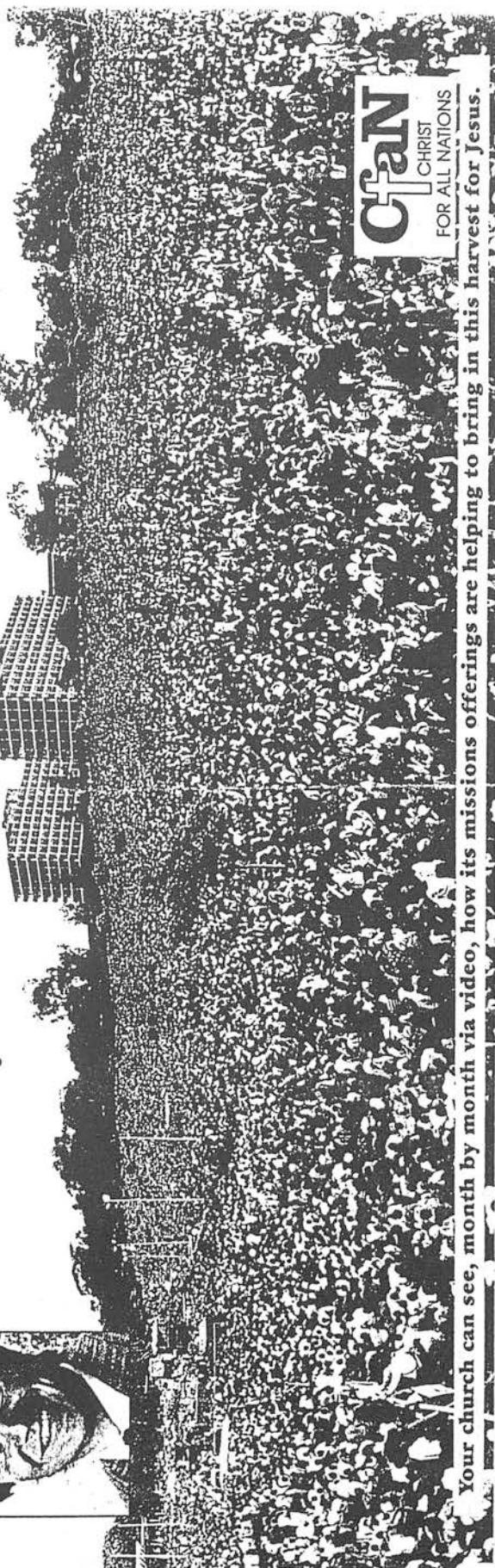
With the help of God, I, the undersigned, commit myself, by God's grace, to fulfill this covenant and to live for His glory.

Date _____ Signature _____

Appendix 9. Christ for All Nations, Promotional Brochure.



Africa is being saved... and you can see it happen



Your church can see, month by month via video, how its missions offerings are helping to bring in this harvest for Jesus.

In the last two years more than two million souls in Africa have come into God's kingdom through the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke. This work takes place mostly in remote areas where few can travel to see it happen. It is a work of literally "preaching the Gospel to the poor." Remarkable signs and wonders are taking place following the preaching of the Gospel. Tens of thousands are being converted as Jesus opens blind eyes, heals the crippled, opens deaf ears and shows forth His miracle power. Whole cities bound by witchcraft are being set free through the proclamation of the Gospel. This is not just talk ... we can show you month by month, via video reports, how your missions offerings are helping to bring in the enormous

harvest in Africa and other parts of the world.

CHALLENGE

We are asking church congregations to be a part of this mighty move of God's Spirit. Reinhard Bonnke works on a schedule of about nine large Gospel crusades in Africa each year and at least one additional crusade in another part of the world (normally Asia). If your church will include the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in its monthly missions budget, we will furnish you with a 10 to 15 minute quality news report on video following each crusade. We also will send your church a press release and photos covering each campaign. The object is for your congregation to see *exactly* where *its support* is going. Even more

importantly, your church will be planting seed into one of the richest harvest fields in the world and will become a shareholder in the millions coming to Christ in Africa each year.

STARTING OFFER

If you are interested in making a missions commitment to the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke, we will immediately send you a free copy of the programme, "A Blood-Washed Africa," which shares the vision for Africa to be saved. This video shows dramatic miracle testimonies being experienced at Reinhard Bonnke's meetings. Also included in this programme is information about Reinhard Bonnke's giant Gospel tent - a seven-storey structure that holds 30,000 people. This documentary will

give you a foretaste of the high-quality video reporting you can expect in the future.

PERSONAL WORD FROM REINHARD BONNKE

We have an urgency in our spirits to increase our evangelistic efforts, but we need God's people to stand shoulder to shoulder with us in these mass outreaches. The fields are truly ripe and white unto harvest as never before. Harvest time is a fixed season, and we don't want to miss this opportune moment to bring in a great end time harvest of souls for *Culture's sake*. IT IS MOST DEFINITELY A MATTER OF ETERNAL GAIN OR EVERLASTING LOSS! Please prayerfully consider the amount your church should invest monthly in this work.

To respond, please fill out this form.

☐ Yes, I'm interested. Please contact me with details on how our church can be a part of this programme.

CHURCH NAME

PASTOR'S NAME

ADDRESS

TEL

Please mail to: ***SOURCE:**
Christ for All Nations, Little Cornbow,
Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 3AJ
Great Britain

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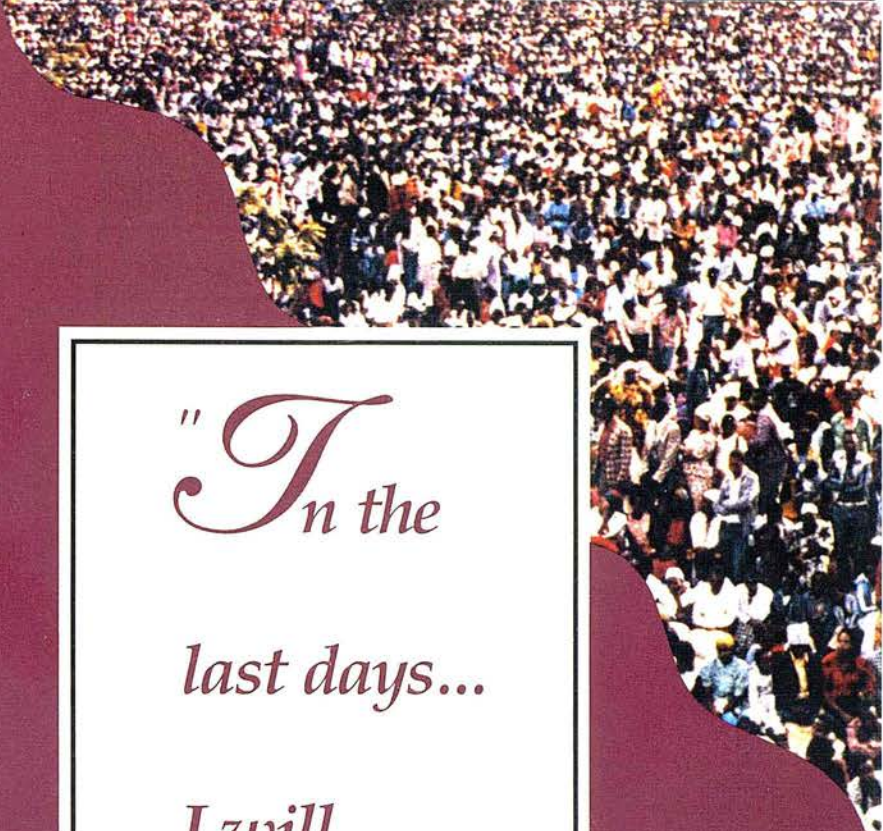
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*"In the
last days...
I will
pour out
My Spirit
upon all
flesh"*

—Acts 2:17

REINHARD BONNKE
MINISTRIES



"Christ for all Nations" (CfaN), or "Reinhard Bonnke Ministries", as it is known in the USA, was founded and is led by West German-born evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. He is a single-minded preacher whose exclusive aim is to assist churches in winning the lost for Christ. Reinhard's CfaN ministry is a non-denominational work that has no secondary objectives aside from pure evangelism, no schemes except for soul-saving. The organization does not seek to establish an independent body, but exists solely for the purpose of building up existing churches. CfaN once was described aptly as "a spiritual midwife bringing children into the family of the Church".

Christ for all Nations' Gospel crusades are not Christian rallies—they are meetings directed toward the unconverted. With such a God-given emphasis, the Holy Spirit is free to sweep over the crowds and bring about the greatest miracle of all, that of NEW LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST. Upon hearing the Gospel, as many as 80% or 90% of the unconverted call on Jesus for salvation. The International Pentecostal Press Association speaks of "an explosion in church growth" following CfaN crusades—in some areas, church membership has tripled. It is estimated conservatively that about a million souls respond to the call of salvation through Reinhard's simple preaching of the Gospel each year.

"This is God's reaping time. Something can be done! God has prepared for everything, not by might, not by power, but by His Spirit. This is what we are to rely upon—the miracle power of Jesus."

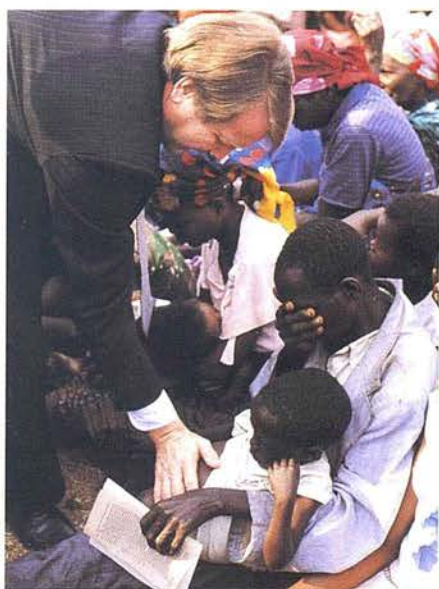


REINHARD BONNKE

*I*n 1972, a relentless purpose gripped the heart of Reinhard Bonnke, a young missionary to Africa. Burning to find ways to harvest the ripened fields on that continent, the Hand of God came upon him. Bonnke saw a vision of the continent of Africa, washed in the Blood of Jesus, and heard the Voice of the Holy Spirit say, "Africa shall be saved!" Obedient to this heavenly call, Bonnke made his early efforts at the Holy Spirit's direct leading. Right

from the start, there was an astonishing response to the Gospel, and thrilling miracles of healing took place!

Tents often were used in CfaN's early African crusades, becoming ever bigger in size until a 30,000-seat structure, the largest moveable tent in the world, finally was constructed. The "Big Tent", as it was known, was used from 1984-86. After nearly 200,000 people came together for a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, however, it became clear that Bonnke's "tent days" were over. The huge structure has been given to another ministry for similar work in the country of Mozambique.



◀ *Despite the masses, Reinhard takes time to minister to individual needs.*

▼ *Up to 200,000 gather to hear the Gospel in Nairobi, Kenya.*



The ministry of Christ for all Nations has had the privilege of being used by God to shake cities and entire nations with the power of the Gospel. Souls call out to Jesus for salvation, the blind see, the deaf hear, the cripples walk—all to the glory of God. Behind this evangelistic effort, however, is a constant battle being waged in prayer. Intercessors start to pray many weeks before each crusade takes place. Work is done to prepare an army of prayer warriors from the ranks of the local believers. Through the warring prayers of the intercessors, the strongholds of Satan are torn down. Many of the mighty miracles of salvation and healing must be attributed directly to the prayer efforts of the intercessory teams.

Despite the way God personally uses Reinhard, he is very much a team player. He not only works closely with local churches in all his evangelistic efforts, but he also tries to impart to others the anointings and giftings that God has bestowed so richly on his own life. To this aim, Christ for all Nations holds "Fire Conferences" in Africa and Europe, bringing together Christians from as many as 50 nations at a time, and having attendances of up to 20,000 people. These gatherings give intensive help and encouragement to those seeking greater effectiveness in evangelism. Reinhard Bonnke also visits conferences around the globe with the same urgent vision—to call the entire Body of Christ to greater evangelistic efforts. Bonnke has written a unique book, entitled *Evangelism by Fire*, which carries a burning message on how to initiate revival.



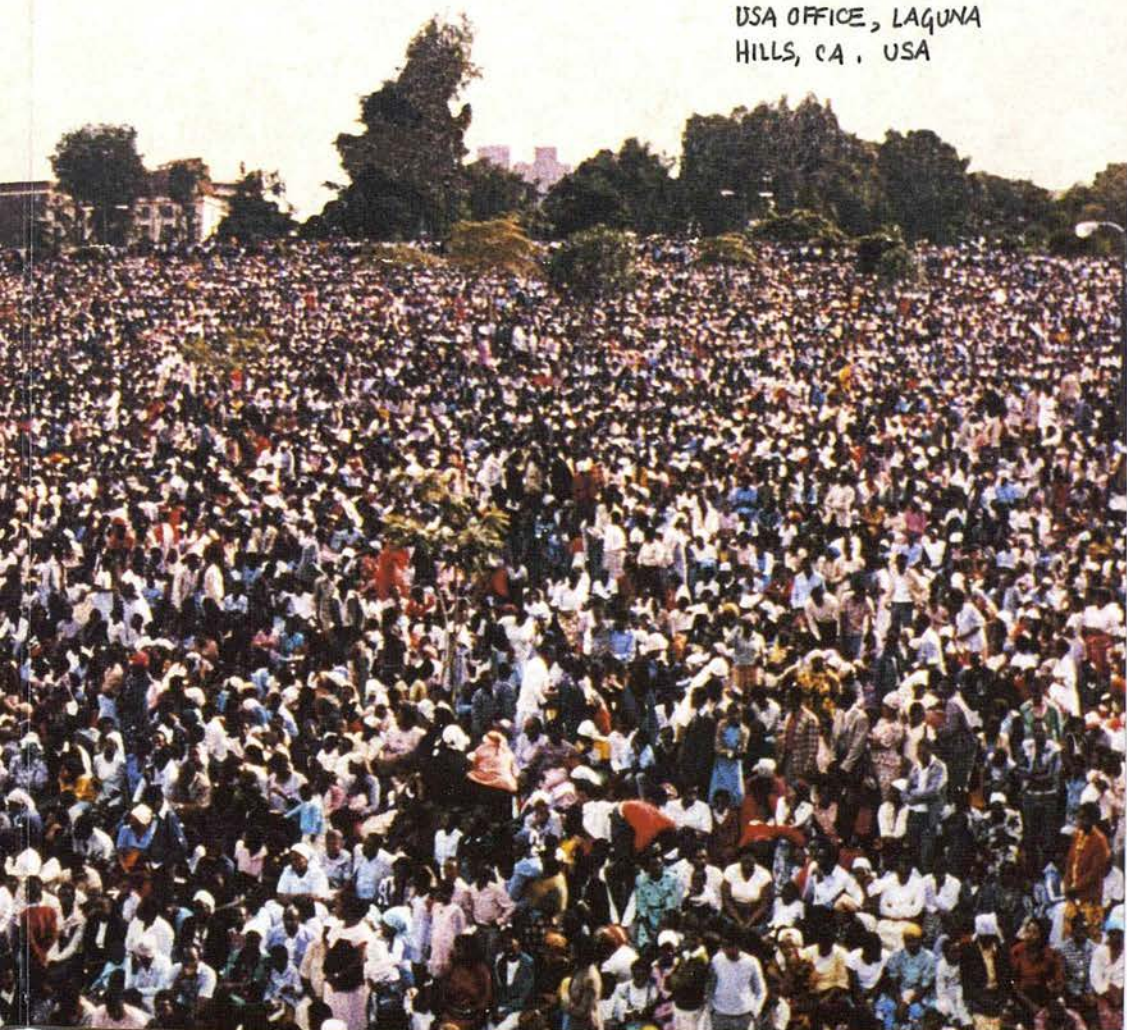
Recently, God has spoken to Reinhard Bonnke to INCREASE the work from 10 to 12 MAJOR CRUSADES EVERY YEAR. In due course, the ministry plans to increase the number of evangelistic outreaches to 20. This, of course, will double the organization's budget, but Reinhard believes the Lord will raise up men and women to support the mission. The CfaN team is preparing, in faith, for greater crowds than they yet have seen. The organization now has a modern sound system which can transmit the Gospel to a crowd over a million strong.

God once told Reinhard that, if he was faithful to feed the multitudes in Africa with the bread from heaven, the Lord would fill his baskets as He did in the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. This word has been proven true. God has sustained the ministry through financial crisis, often miraculously. In obedience to the Great Commission, Reinhard literally is preaching the Gospel to the poor. It is his prayer that the hearts of God's people will be touched to invest financially and to become shareholders in the multitudes coming to Jesus through his ministry each year.

SOURCE :

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